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BOB COSTAS
AN OLYMPIAN INTERVIEW

A FATAL ERROR IN THE WAR ON DRUGS

20Q WITH SPEED DEMON MICHAEL JOHNSON

GIRLS OF Conference USA

COLLEGE STUFF
PIGSKIN PREVIEW
CAMPUS FASHION
FICTION WINNER

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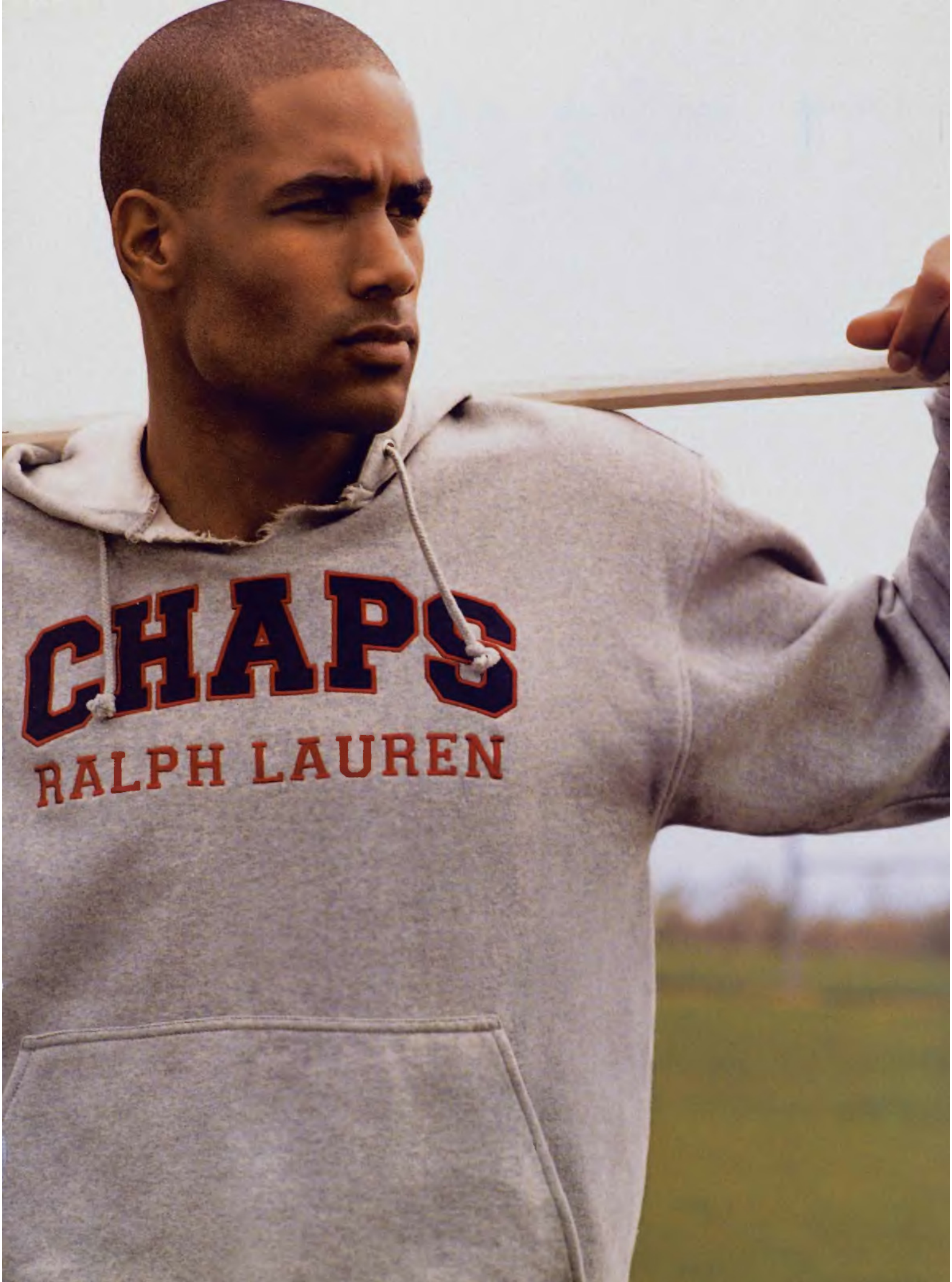
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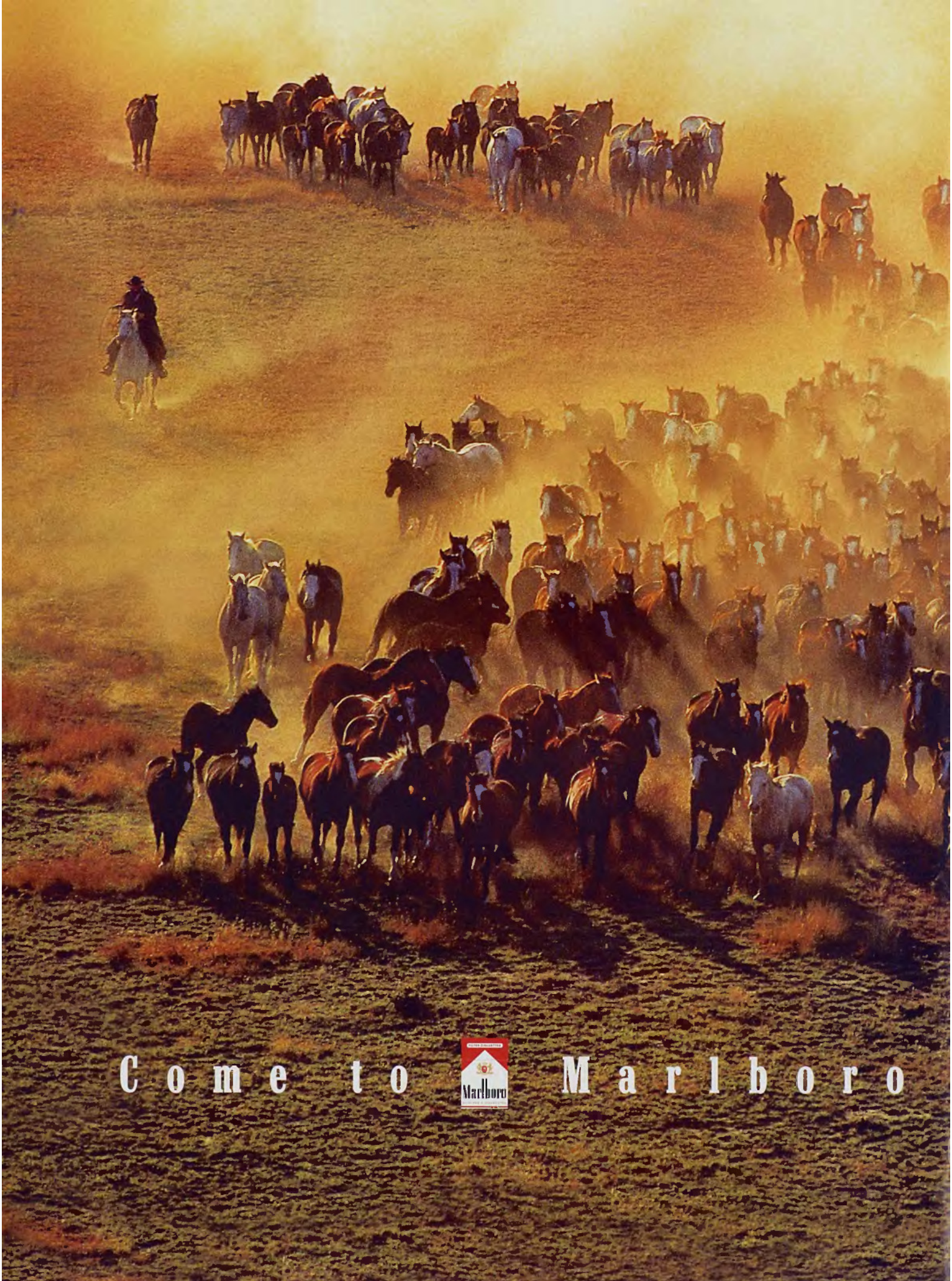
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TEEN T
Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

Sega Dreamcast

Playbill

IT'S THAT TIME of year again. Overhead, bikinis and miniskirts are flying south for the winter. Rainwater is pooling on the barbecue. Still, fall is full of anticipation. We're looking forward to the Olympics and the World Series. Of all the surprise finishes ahead we can count on one thing: the spry commentary of **Bob Costas.** He's a sports hound on smart drugs. He can call any and every game. Lately he's cut back to concentrate on baseball, the Summer Games and an upcoming show on HBO. In a *Playboy Interview* by **Diane K. Shah,** he analyzes the counterpunching of Howard Cosell and the persiflage of John Tesh, then rips into sports radio hosts, maudlin announcers and athletes who credit Jesus for a touchdown. Save some breath for **Michael Johnson.** Look for him to dominate the 400-meter races in Australia. This month he sprints through a gold-medal *20 Questions* by **Ken Stephens.** One of Johnson's many secrets revealed: Listening to Tupac Shakur makes him shake a leg. And we thought it was the shoes.

There is no social policy more destructive than the war on drugs. Prison populations have exploded. Neighborhood cops have been turned into paramilitary aggressors. Of all the crimes recently committed in the name of the law, the worst may well be the killing of Patrick Dorismond. In *Casualty in the War on Drugs*, Pulitzer Prize–winning columnist **Jim Dwyer** recreates the night New York cops fatally shot an innocent man. The artwork is by **John Thompson.**

Jeepers! It took nine months, five judges (**Scott Adams, Gahan Wilson, Kevin Smith, Michelle Urry** and **Jay Boersma**) and enough cartoon boobies to float the *Titanic*, but the wait is over. You'll find the winners of the Playboy Comix and Animation Contest in *Toon In!* "The judges were brilliant about the iconoclastic artwork," says Urry. "They were just plain smart. The whole thing was a joyous explosion." You can also watch the winners on the web. It's called putting the I in synergy.

College bound and spiral bound: Forget notebooks, we're talking football. Sports Editor **Gary Cole** throws your preconceptions for a loop and kicks off this year's college package with *Playboy's Pigskin Preview*. Don't know which schools are in Conference USA? Neither did we—until we decided the new alliance would make a perfect *Girls Of* pictorial. For fiction, we have the 15th winner of our annual College Fiction Contest. *The Collection Treatment* is by **Yael Schonfeld** of San Francisco State. Prepare to be creeped out—in the story, it's checkout time at the Hotel of Lost Souls. Ever feel that your sweats look better than your casual clothes? Designers have noticed and change is coming. In *Back to Campus Fashion* by **Joseph De Acetis,** sportswear and athletic wear blend in a match made in college.

Brad Pitt doesn't know squat. There are tough guys who would gladly show the star of *Fight Club* how to throw hands. In *Pit Fighting* **Chauncey Hollingsworth** goes underground to the brawls. For a less callous treatment of your paws, turn to *Crazy Hand Jive* by **Beth Tomkiw.** It's a review of the latest Palm readers, which handle e-mail, games and music. Juggling two girlfriends was never easier. While we all want to live at the Mansion, hanging out with Modern Living Editor **David Stevens** wouldn't be a bad consolation prize. In *Dave's Garage: Round 2*, Stevens tools around in a Toyota MR2 and a Lexus IS300. It's almost as good as hopping on a jet to the Caribbean. We have just the destination. *Of Heat and Hedonism*, a pictorial shot by **George Georgiou** and produced by **Kevin Kuster,** is a visual escape to the bare and beautiful landscape of Hedonism III in Jamaica. We're talking human ice cream sundae contests. Need a travel tip? Leave the napkins behind.

SHAH

STEPHENS

DWYER

THOMPSON

URRY

COLE

SCHONFELD

DE ACETIS

HOLLINGSWORTH

TOMKIW

STEVENS

GEORGIOU, KUSTER

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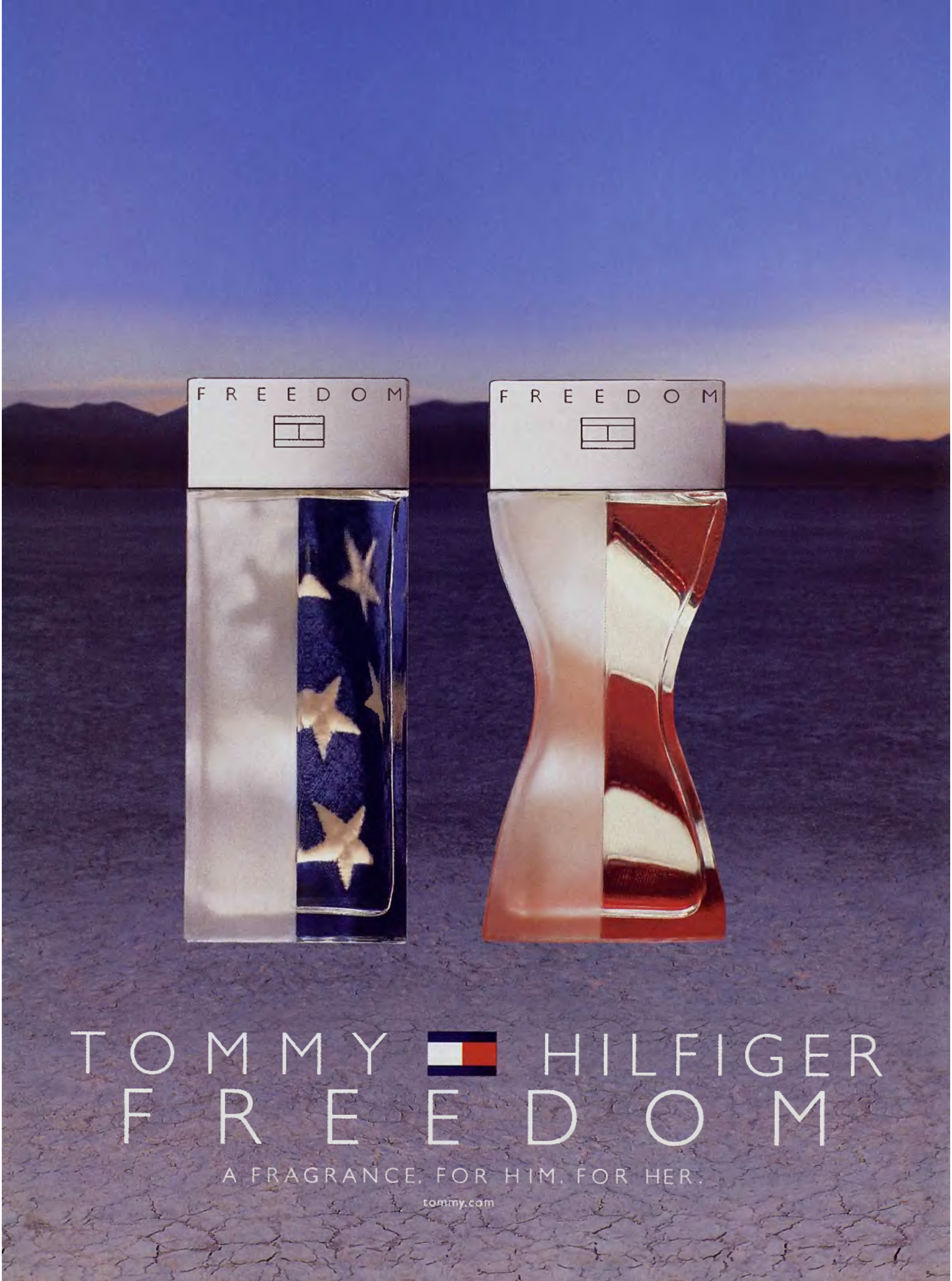
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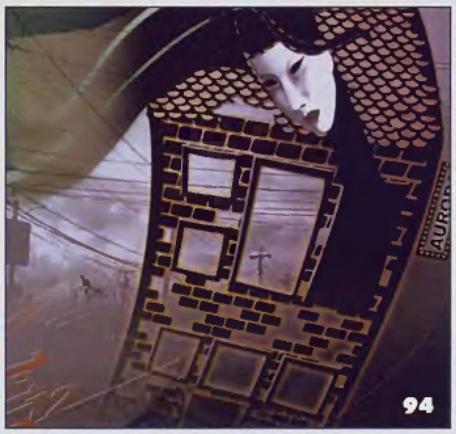

cover story

Conference USA, a college newcomer, boosts serious strength in men's basketball, as well as nine other NCAA sports. Join cover model and cheerleader Lauren Michelle Hill (shot by Arny Freytag) as PLAYBOY salutes the league's other asset: its gorgeous women. Taken with Lauren's denim? The ad with ordering information is on page 74. Our Rabbit has his pen out.

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Billions are spent on border patrols and helicopters. City streets have become war zones. In New York a man got ambushed by undercover cops. He was innocent. Now he's dead. **BY JIM DWYER**

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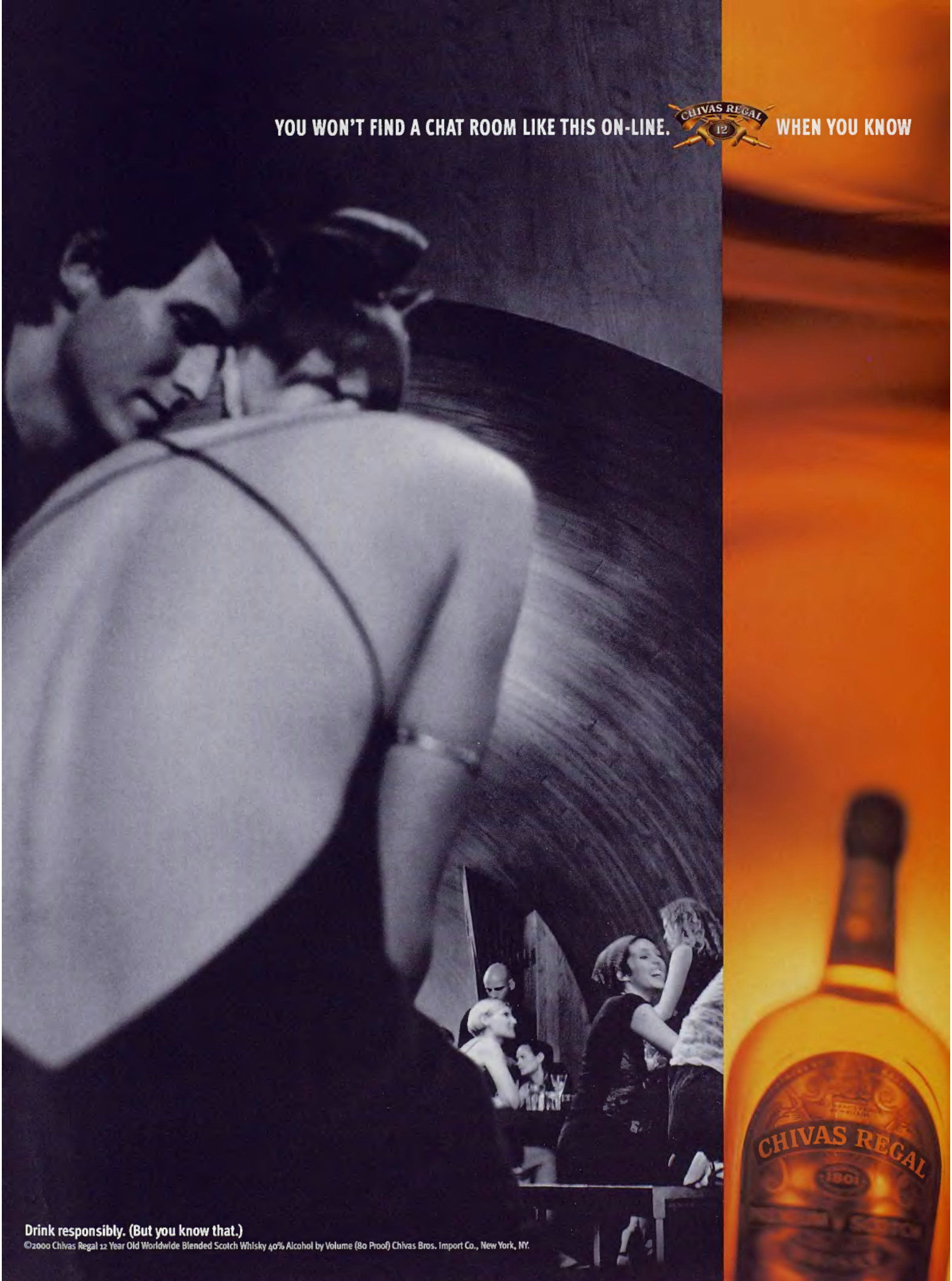
BY DIANE K. SHAH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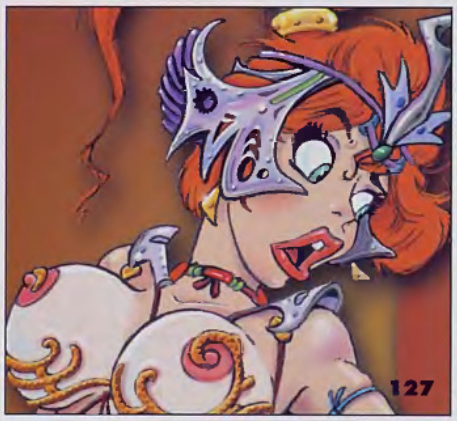

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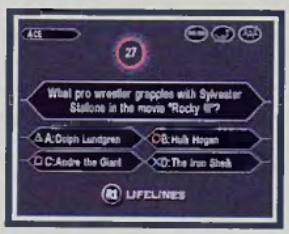
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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

hef sightings, mansion frolics and nightlife notes

SWEET SCIENCE AT THE MANSION

When ESPN2 broadcast *Friday Night Fights* from the Mansion, that was a first. Hef turned the tennis court into a professional boxing ring. It was a KO.

OUT ON THE TOWN

After rockers Godsmack appeared in the premiere episode of sexnrockn roll.com at the Mansion, Hef and the Playmates took them out for dinner and dancing on the Sunset Strip. The website is an association between Playmate Gillian Bonner's Internet company and Playboy.com. Log on.

BRANDE RODERICK GETS LEI'D

Even in Hef's world, it's not all play. Working girl Brande heads to the islands for a recurring role on *Baywatch Hawaii*. Hef and his girls see her off in style.

GOING HOLLYWOOD

Woody Allen, who rarely travels west, came to the Big Orange with wife Soon-Yi to promote his most recent movie, *Small Time Crooks*, at film schools—and found time to visit his old friend Hef.

ROLL THE TAPE

Where's the hippest spot to tape a television show? These days it's the Mansion, host to both *The Man Show* (left) and *Politically Incorrect*. Stacy Fuson, Victoria Fuller and Heather Kozar assisted the men, while Jeff Bridges and our man Hef offered Bill Maher their full support.

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3. GENERAL RULES: Sweepstakes open to residents of the U.S. who are smokers, 21 years of age or older at time of entry. Employees of Philip Morris Incorporated ("PM USA"), its affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies and the immediate family members of each are not eligible. Void in MA, MI, VA and where prohibited by law. All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply. All entries become the exclusive property of PM USA and will not be returned. PM USA will not be responsible for lost, late, damaged, postage due, misdirected or mutilated mail. Incomplete or illegible entries, entries without a signature or entries not including a date of birth will be deemed null and void. A random drawing to award all prizes will be held on or about 1/23/01 from among all eligible entries received by D. L. Blair, Inc., an independent judging organization whose decisions are final on all matters relating to this sweepstakes. The odds of winning depend upon the number of eligible entries received. Potential winners will be required to sign and return an Affidavit of Eligibility/Release of Liability/Publicity Release/Prize Acceptance Form and to submit sufficient proof of age in the form of a legible photocopy of a valid government-issued ID (e.g., an unexpired driver's license on which your name, address, date of birth and signature appear) within 14 days of attempted notification. Noncompliance within this time period may result in disqualification and the selection of an alternate winner. Winners will be notified by mail on or about 2/9/01. Any prize/prize notification returned to PM USA as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Traveling companions of travel prizewinners will be required to sign and return a Release of Liability and submit a legible photocopy of a valid government-issued ID prior to departure and must be 21 years of age or older at time of winner's notification. Travelers must possess required travel documents (e.g., valid photo ID etc.) and must travel on dates specified by PM USA. Limit one prize per person. Winners are responsible for all federal, state and local taxes; motor home winner is additionally responsible for any applicable licensing, insurance, title and registration fees. No transfer or substitution of prize permitted. PM USA reserves the right to provide a cash alternative at its sole discretion. This sweepstakes will also be offered through participating retailers and direct mail. PM USA will have no liability in connection with the acceptance or use of the prize awarded. Acceptance of prize offered constitutes permission to use winner's name and likeness for commercial purposes without further notice and compensation, unless prohibited by law.
4. PRIZES AND APPROXIMATE RETAIL VALUES: A total of 2,028 prizes will be awarded as follows: (1) Grand Prize–Brand New His & Her Motor Homes (Model 28A Four Winds® 5000), including 2-way radios and "his & her" bathrobes ($127,084). (2) First Prizes–a Dream Wedding–we will provide you with a Bridal Consultant and $22,000 to create your dream wedding. You will also receive a wedding music CD and a "Just Married" sign for your car ($25,012 each). (50) Second Prizes–a $1,000 Shopping Spree–you will receive a check in the amount of $1,000, a shopping cart and a silver-plated money clip ($1,050 each). (15) Third Prizes–a 5-day/4-night trip for two to Niagara Falls, including roundtrip coach air transportation from commercial airport nearest winner's home, hotel accommodations (one room, double occupancy) on the U.S. side, rental car and $1,000 spending money ($3,900 each). Must be taken within one year from the date the prize is awarded. (20) Fourth Prizes–New GE® Appliances including a dishwasher, a stackable washer/dryer, winner's choice of gas or electric stove, a refrigerator, $200 (to be used for installation of appliances), a year's supply of laundry detergent (awarded in the form of twelve 5.7 lb. boxes delivered to winner's home in 1 shipment), an oven mitt and 1 sock ($3,288 each). (30) Fifth Prizes–a John Deere® riding lawn mower, including racing goggles, driving gloves and a cup holder ($2,584 each). (10) Sixth Prizes–a 3-day/2-night trip for two to Bradford, PA, including roundtrip coach air transportation from commercial airport nearest winner's home, hotel accommodations (one room, double occupancy), a rental car, $500 spending money, a visit to the Zippo® Lighter Museum and a Zippo lighter ($3,000 each). Trip must be taken on dates specified by PM USA. (100) Seventh Prizes–a Weber® Gas Grill, including an apron and a fire extinguisher ($764 each). (100) Eighth Prizes–a year's supply of beef jerky from Omaha Steaks (awarded in the form of two 8-oz. packages of beef jerky per month) and toothpicks ($482 each). (350) Ninth Prizes–a Coleman® Cooler ($35 each). (350) Tenth Prizes–an American Flag, including pole and mounting hardware and apple pie recipe ($40 each). (1,000) Eleventh Prizes–a coupon for a free carton of Basic cigarettes ($27 each). Residents of the states of MN, UT and King County, WA will receive the cash equivalent of the carton coupon. Prizes consist only of those items specifically listed as part of the prize.
5. For the names of major prizewinners, available after 3/30/01, send a separate, self-addressed, stamped, #10 envelope to: Basic Part 2 Sweepstakes Winners, P.O. Box 4212, Blair, NE 68009-4212.

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- Airfare/hotel
- Private group tour
- Gift bag

350 AMERICAN FLAGS

- Mounting kit
- Pole included
- Recipe for apple pie

100 ONE-YEAR SUPPLIES OF OMAHA STEAKS BEEF JERKY

- 12 lbs. o' beef
- Comes in great flavors like beef!
- A year supply of toothpicks

BONUS!

HEF'S FIGHT CLUB

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How cool is it that ESPN2 makes house calls? Gathered at the Mansion to watch the knockouts: (1) The host, Sandy and Butterbean. (2) PLAYBOY cover girl Mia St. John vs. Franchesca Alcantar. (3) ESPN announcer Amy Hayes, attorney Robert Shapiro and his son. (4) Muhammad Ali's daughter Laila. (5) Darva Conger and Hef. (6) Judd Nelson and cruiserweight Max Heyman. (7) Boxer Vassiliy Jirov meets the press. (8) Hef and his gang of four. (9) Michael Jai White, who played Mike Tyson on TV, and friend. (10) The ring girls were Bunnies, natch. (11) Bill Maher, Jennifer Rovero, Ava Fabian, Victoria Fuller, Neferteri Shepherd and a friend get *Politically Incorrect*. (12) Rob Schneider, Michelle Phillips, Bijou Phillips, Maher and Jeff Bridges. (13) Maher and William Shatner hash it out. (14) Lisa Dergan, LeRoy Neiman, Angela Little and PMOY Jodi Ann Paterson in New York.

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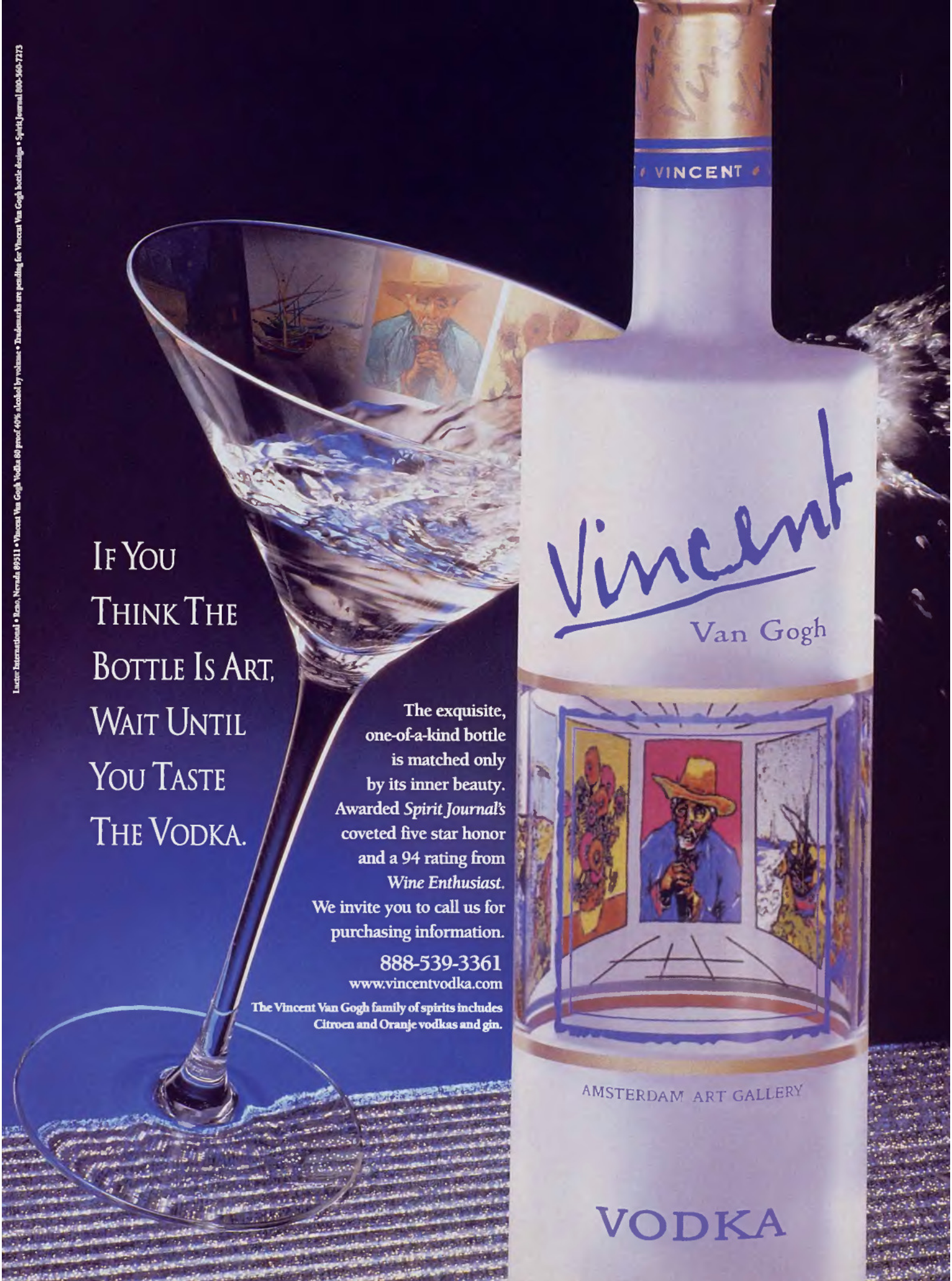

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ALOHA BRANDE

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Brande Roderick isn't the only one who got lei'd at Hef's farewell luau. Leonardo DiCaprio and Tobey Maguire were among the celebrities who came to congratulate *Baywatch Hawaii*'s newest lifeguard. (1) An Elvis impersonator gets Brande all shook up. (2) Brande, Hef and Verne Troyer. (3) Hottie magnet James Woods. (4) Scott Baio, Jeannette Jonsson and friend. (5) It's not a luau without hula girls. (6) Hef with Mandy, Sandy and Heather Kozar. (7) A Jell-O shot, Mr. Lovitz? (8) Scott Caan and friend. (9) Hef and Jon Lovitz with Jaime Bergman, Jodi Ann Paterson, Lisa Dergan and Carrie Stevens. (10) Stephen Dorff and Luke Wilson party with the PMOY. (11) Shana Van Patten, Heather Kozar and Stacy Fuson groove. (12) We'd jump through hoops for Jennifer Rovero. (13) Thora Birch, Amy Harmer and Brande.

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THIS SCENIC VIEW BROUGHT TO YOU BY A GUSSETED CROTCH.

Chairman Gert Boyle

It's often the little things that make the biggest difference. For example, a binding fit can ruin even the best of views. Which is why you find so many functional details in the Combat Pant™. Rugged nylon Outfitter Canvas™ keeps nature on the outside. A purposeful cut with radial leg gussets makes movement easy. And reinforced articulated knees make them tough and comfortable so you won't only get to the view, you'll also enjoy it. For a dealer near you call 1-800-MA BOYLE.

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Winston Lights Box 9 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

UNTIL I FIND A REAL MAN, I'LL TAKE A REAL SMOKE.

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100% FIRST-CUT,™ IT'S FOR REAL.

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Because 100% first-cut tobacco naturally tastes better.

100% FIRST-CUT TOBACCO

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Dear Playboy

680 NORTH LAKE SHORE DRIVE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60611
E-MAIL DEARPB@PLAYBOY.COM

NEF AND HEF

Way to go, Hef. Neferteri Shepherd (*Neferteri: One Great Shepherd*, July) is a Playmate who lives up to her name.

David Ip Fung Chun
Markham, Ontario

With her gorgeous figure, beautiful face, great smile and eyes to match, Neferteri is a goddess.

Jeremiah Smith
Warsaw, North Carolina

And you, sir, are agog.

How far has our quest for racial equality come? We're on the brink of a major stride with PLAYBOY's July 2000 issue. Hats off to photographer Arny Freytag for his work with Neferteri. Occasionally, a Playmate comes along that the camera can't seem to get enough of—and Neferteri is all that.

Michael Chadwell
Florissant, Missouri

Playmate Neferteri Shepherd.

BY GEORGE

Everyone should give George Clooney (*Playboy Interview*, July) a break. *Batman and Robin* bombed, but it wasn't his fault. Director Joel Schumacher turned the franchise into a cross between a gay carnival and the awful Sixties television show. Blame Schumacher for ruining a good thing.

Robert Waller
Cartersville, Georgia

Your problem is men in tights. Ours was Chris O'Donnell.

I have never felt as close to an actor as I did after reading the interview with George Clooney. He is real. His success is all his own and an inspiration to those who give up easily.

Kathy Richardson
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

TO HELL AND BACK

You forgot to mention Hell, Michigan in your *After Hours* list of unfortunately named places to live ("Atlas Shrugged," July). When someone tells you to go to hell, at least it will be a short trip.

Nick Pappageorgio
Ann Arbor, Michigan

In addition to Wet Beaver Creek, there is Dry Beaver Creek, which drains south out of Sedona, Arizona.

David Haines
Phoenix, Arizona

Somewhere between Hell and high water are a million readers combing an atlas, trying to get into Dear Playboy.

GROUP GROPE

Your "Hey, Isn't That Twyla Tharp?" item (*After Hours*, July) calling orgies pagan rituals is not entirely right. Not all

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pagans participate in orgies. As a Christian-Pagan, I think any act that brings you closer to God and mother earth is positive, but not an excuse for an orgy.

Tim Donald
Miami Lakes, Florida

Relax, we start to hyphenate at orgies, too.

TEA PARTY

Your July *Mantrack* blueprint on how to make a Long Island iced tea is missing an essential ingredient. In my experience as a bartender, I've never seen the drink made without a splash of sour mix.

Jeff Johnson
Kalamazoo, Michigan

I'm a loyal PLAYBOY reader and regard your magazine as the authority on fashion and lifestyle. But I must correct your authors on their recipe for Long Island iced tea. As a professional bartender for many years, I know there are many versions of any given drink and that recipes vary from bar to bar. But a true Long Island iced tea is made with half an ounce each of vodka, gin, rum and triple sec, poured over ice with sweet-and-sour mix and a dash of cola for color. Drink up, and remember to tip your bartender.

Tempest in a teapot.

Dublin Sweeney
Phoenix, Arizona

Some bartenders include a splash of sour mix in their Long Island iced teas, but to our taste, the sour mix is an unnecessary grace note to this devastating mix of liquors. Besides, the whole point of an LI iced tea is to separate a young lady from her underwear. If she puckers, all the better, but we prefer that it not be on account of the drink.

VIVA LAS VEGAS

Let's set the record straight. Your *Absolute Vegas* article (July) is well written and accurate except for one thing—the "City of Fights" item. It isn't true that every casino has "a fistfight or two a day." I've lived in Vegas for two years and wager on sports daily, and I've never seen casino patrons come to blows. I asked friends who work at casinos, and no one could remember the last time a fight broke out between guests.

Tim Utley
Las Vegas, Nevada

You talkin' to us?

Your rules for Let It Ride are inaccurate. You say each player gets five cards and two common cards, and that the player's goal is to get a better poker hand than the dealer. Not true. Each player gets only three cards (and two common cards), and the goal is not to beat the dealer but to get a good poker hand. A pair of 10s or better pays. In fact, the dealer doesn't even play a hand.

Aaron Lewis
Beverly, Massachusetts

A PERFECT 10

Is Asa Baber crazy? He's alone with God as a naked Bo Derek, he's granted a wish, and he wishes for jogging (*Men*, July)? Asa missed his chance to bring about the Second Coming.

Don Holland
Columbus, Ohio

Asa Baber is crazy like a fox.

A DALY DOSE

Carson Daly (*20 Questions*, July) tries to sound like Mr. Perfect regarding his breakup with Jennifer Love Hewitt. He's forgotten that it takes two to tango.

Randall Coan
Stephenville, Texas

Did you see Love's now-canceled Party of Five spin-off, Time of Your Life? It may take only one to tango.

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

Congratulations to PLAYBOY for promoting Latina fever. Your pictorial (*Nice Chalupas!* July) features beautiful Hispanic women but focuses on the stereotypical Latin female—brunette, brown eyes, tanned skin—more than on Hispanic diversity. Just watch the soap operas on any of the Spanish-language networks, and you'll find that their looks range from blonde with pearl-toned skin to chocolate mousse sweetness. The real beauty of Hispanic females is the diversity of their good looks.

Joe Santini
Lovejoy, Georgia

We're convinced.

Thanks for reminding me that Latin women make my blood boil. I would love to see Amelia Garduño return as a Playmate.

Bill Hatfield
Silver Creek, New York

The Latin ladies pictorial has me doing the samba in slow motion.

Barry Deimel
Delano, California

Lovely Amelia Garduño.

Amelia Garduño said that she hopes to someday start a foundation to help those who are in need. Well, I too have a burning need—to see Amelia featured as a Centerfold.

Gil Geraths
Penn Valley, California

You must make Rebecca Ramos a Playmate.

Victor Gonzales
San Antonio, Texas

DAUGHTER OF THE BEACH

I was blown away by the Jaime Bergman pictorial (*Blonde on the Beach*, July). Hats off to photographer Stephen Wayda for taking fabulous pictures and to Jaime for being so damn beautiful.

Robert Admire
Fountain Inn, South Carolina

I couldn't wait to see the Jaime Bergman pictorial. She's a beautiful woman. But when it arrived, I was disappointed. It looked more like a recycled Pamela Anderson shoot.

Greg Giovacchini
Trenton, New Jersey

Thanks for the great photos of beach goddess Jaime Bergman. Swimming in the ocean will never be the same.

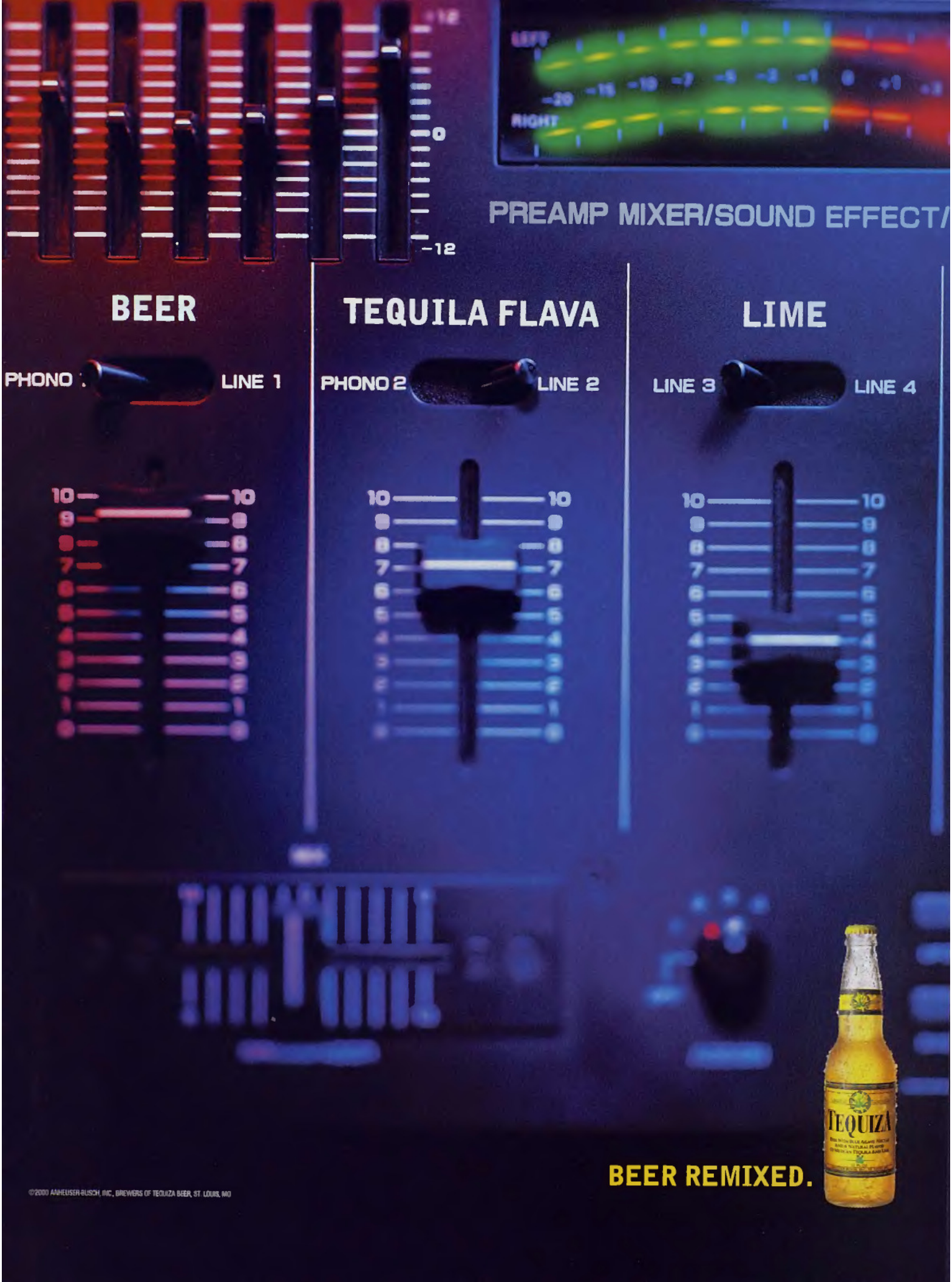
Brooks Remaley
Scottsdale, Arizona

IF I WERE HEF

The pictures of the Mansion parties got me thinking. How can Hef be in on all the stuff that's happening? If I were Hef, I'd have video cameras in all the party hot spots.

James Harrison
Phoenix, Arizona

What makes you think he doesn't?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YOU COMMIT 4 OF THE 7 DEADLY SINS JUST LOOKING AT IT.

Behold the cutting edge of Harley-Davidson styling. Pure tradition, in a place it's never been. Note the clean front end, stretched fuel tank and rear fender (Lust). Check the steel hoses, small turn signals and recessed taillight (Envy). The look would put a show bike to shame (Pride). At the center is a twin balanced, Twin Cam 88B™ engine (Gluttony). The Softail® Deuce.™ Call 1-800-443-2153 or visit www.harley-davidson.com for a dealer. The Legend Rolls On.™

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A GUY'S GUIDE TO WHAT'S HIP AND WHAT'S HAPPENING

WAXING POETIC

In summing up a range of summer fun, *New York* magazine included information about where to get a bikini wax in the city. Among the places mentioned was a shop named Bliss, where Madonna and Cindy Crawford go. Bliss offers a number of wax treatments, but the one that caught our eye is called Escape From the Ape ($28), which prepares patrons for the standard bikini. We were too upset to inquire as to the availability of a procedure called Get Loose From the Moose.

ABSOLUTELY NOT

Absolut Vodka is probably more appreciated as an advertising campaign than as a drink, and that campaign is now 20 years old. To celebrate, Absolut commissioned 20 portraits that have been cropping up in various magazines over the past few months. We were struck by the one with our friends Trey Parker and Matt Stone—holding Absolut centerfolds. Now, we know from vodka and we know from Centerfolds. And we think both Matt and Trey are being shortchanged here.

GLAMOUR PUSS

Feminine hygiene has never been our favorite phrase. Then a Manhattan spa, Life Is Beautiful, designed a new line of products for the topical pampering of our favorite vacation spot. Ever since we gave them to our girlfriend, we've been paying lip service to Pussy products. There's Pussy Wash and Pussy Scrub—even Pussy Tonic, which we find works better than toothpaste.

SPUDDERED OUT

Citing high legal costs, Harley-Davidson gave up its six-year battle to trademark the sound its motorcycle engines make. The sound, described in legal documents as "potato-potato-potato," was deemed unique enough to deserve a trademark by the U.S. Patent and Trademark office back in 1994, but competitors Honda and Yamaha opposed it. The bid has been tied up in litigation ever since. Harley isn't too concerned, though—in a survey of its customers, 97 percent said they would recognize a Harley by its sound alone. The other three percent said, "What?"

VEIL OF TEARS

Another cause for ululation! A 25-year-old Iranian man who recently underwent a sex change now wants to reverse the operation because he/she finds life as a female insufferable in Iran. All his friends are now using the opportunity to say, "Ayatollah so."

SMASHING PUNKINS

We have a new favorite fall classic, one in which returning champions defend their titles with truck-mounted cannons. It's Delaware's Punkin Chunk pumpkin launching contest, and it's messy. Contestants are serious—perhaps a bit too serious. Some work on the devices year-round before rolling to the launch site with homemade cannon barrels as long as 80 feet. Laser-guided survey equipment tracks the gourds on the ground and helicopters follow them in the air. Winning projectiles fly more than 4000 feet, filling the air with seeds

EIGHT WAYS TO SAY "SORRY, YOU CAN'T SLEEP OVER"

You didn't play the away game and now it's time to clear the field. If there is a graceful and efficient way of giving her the boot, we haven't found it yet. Which is why we're asking readers to send in their best lines. Here are the ones to beat:

1. "I wish you didn't have to go, but I'll never make it to the office by six if I don't crash."
2. "You're a real sport for coming over. Let me pay for the cab."
3. "Do you mind if I film you while you sleep?"
4. "This is awkward, but my friends from out of town are coming back to sleep here in about an hour. I'd love to have you stay over another time."
5. "I'm expecting to be served a subpoena in the morning. Maybe you don't want to be here."
6. "You look tired. I'll take you home."
7. "I'm vulnerable right now and shouldn't get intimate too early on."
8. "I see dead people."

and the same sense of accomplishment you get from popping bubble wrap.

PRESSED PANTS

Researchers recently found that half of British men wear their trousers too tight. The survey, conducted for a low-calorie bread company, also showed that nine out of 10 won't admit to doing it. The ones who do also know all the words to Judy Garland's *C'mon Get Happy*.

ROCK-AND-ROLL GRADE SCHOOL

At the second annual Live Nude Bands, an X-rated concert in San Francisco, 10 bands competed in tugs-of-war and spelling bees. The losing rock stars had to perform their sets in the buff. Rumors circulated that some bands were throwing the competitions, but we'll give them the benefit of the doubt—phlegm and vacuum are difficult to spell. Since most of the naked rock stars were men, the crowd was thrilled when the Gun and Doll Show performed their *Titty Tune* surrounded by 10 topless dancers. Not to be outdone, lesbian punk rockers Tribe 8 also performed topless. Singer Lynn Breedlove strapped on a dildo and challenged any heterosexual man in the audience to suck it. Some guy actually did, proving once again that music transports us in unusual ways. For a finale, punk goddess Storm performed a raunchy version of Britney Spears' *Crazy*. Let's hope next year the real Britney competes. We're sure she can't spell Aguilera.

THE TIP SHEET

Pasture parties: Outdoor rap concerts staged in unsuspecting rural areas of Mississippi and elsewhere in the dirty South. Just don't hip-hop into a pasture party patty.

Penguin Caffeinated Peppermints: Minty mints with an upside. Pick some up at Urban Outfitters and say ciao to coffee breath.

Fruit Fly: New "official" (meaning TV coverage of the San Francisco Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Freedom Day Parade) gay term for fag hag.

"That's so dot-com": This year's version of "that's so five minutes ago."

Dr. K's Dream Cream: Manhattan urologist Jed Kaminetsky is a woman's-mag favorite for his prescription-only genital lotion packed with vasodilators. It makes vaginal capillaries swell and sex more sensational. For her.

Conspiranoia (Plume) by Devon Jackson: A compendium of conspiracy theories, featuring the IRS, John Tesh and the Teletubbies.

Toblerone tunnel: From *Viz* mag, the nice upside-down triangle of space formed by a standing girl's thighs and her kitty hypotenuse. The candy bar, among other things, makes a perfect fit.

Pervasive developmental disorder: What makes a nerd a geek, according to a recent theory. Characterized by speaking in a highly formal monotone, fixating on a single subject, avoiding eye contact and wearing trousers that show off your ankles.

Mike's Hard Lemonade: Tasty new drink rolling out from New England. Works as a beer chaser—and a girl chaser, too.

THE BEST JOINT IN TOWN

The Compassion Flower Inn, the country's first bed, bud and breakfast, is one vacation destination you're guaran-

GADGET OF THE MONTH

Henry Kloss is the audio designer who was the K in KLH and the brains behind Advent. His Advent table radio was, for many years, considered to be the best ever made. Now Kloss has designed the Model 88CD—a radio with CD player, stereo speakers and powered subwoofer. Again audiophiles are raving. Because it delivers the accurate sound of a quality small component system in a compact size, it's ideal for an office or bedroom. It can also serve as a primary stereo system—and its two audio jacks can connect to a cassette deck, minidisc player, MP3 or stereo TV. It's available from Cambridge Soundworks and goes for $349. Kloss is boss.

Note the size of the martini.

Panasonic introduces the DVD micro home theater system. It's a small, elegant, 100-proof expression of everything we know about movies and music.

Plays DVD Video and CDs / Built-In Dolby Digital* Decoder / 5 Speakers /
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RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

QUOTE

"I wrote a thesis: 'Literary Progeria in the Works of Flannery O'Connor and William Faulkner.' Let's just say that during my discussions with Pauly Shore, it doesn't come up much."—CONAN O'BRIEN ADDRESSING STUDENTS AT HIS ALMA MATER, HARVARD

DARK VISION

The year in which H.G. Wells predicted, and named, the "atomic bomb": 1914.

IN PURSUIT OF PIECE

Number of gun purchases that were blocked by state, local or FBI background checks from the February 1994 passage of the Brady Act through the end of 1998: 332,000. Number blocked in 1999: 204,000.

ADDICTIVE HOBBIT

Number of times an online trailer for *The Lord of the Rings* was downloaded in the first week it was available: 6.6 million. Number of times the *Phantom Menace* trailer was downloaded during its first week online: 3.5 million.

GENDER BUYERS

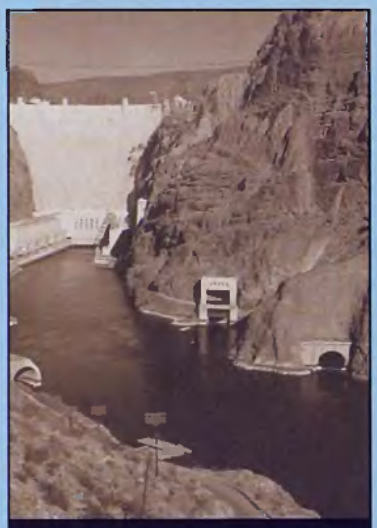
According to a survey by Iowa State University and Kenyatta University in Kenya, percentage of women who buy things they don't need: 36. Percentage of men who buy stuff they don't need: 18.

T IN A

Amount awarded to former exotic dancer Mary Gale, who sued a Park Avenue cosmetic surgeon for using breast implants to augment her derriere: $30,000.

WE SMELL A TREND

Number of pounds of garlic the average American ate in 1980: 1. Number of pounds of garlic per capita in 2000: 3.



FACT OF THE MONTH

Eleven hundred years from now, Hoover Dam (built with enough concrete to fill the Great Pyramid of Giza) will turn into a giant waterfall as a result of the rising sediment levels of Lake Mead.

WHO WOULD HAVE GUESSED?

NBA MVP Shaquille O'Neal's weight at birth: 7 pounds, 15 ounces.

ORBITUARY

Chances of a person's being killed by the orbiting Compton Gamma Ray Observatory satellite when it crashed to earth this spring: 1 in 29 million.

BUT CAN YOU SWAT FLIES WITH AOL?

The percentage of American families with children aged 2 to 17 that have online access: 52. The percentage of American families that regularly subscribe to a newspaper: 42.

COME ON OVER

Number of U.S. immigrants from Italy during 1901 to 1910: 2 million. Number of immigrants from Mexico during the same period: 50,000. Number of U.S. immigrants from Italy during 1991 to 1997: 54,000. Number from Mexico: 1.8 million.

PRO RATED

Bonus received by each player on the 1999 U.S. Women's World Cup team after they won the World Championship: $65,000. Average salary in the WNBA: $58,000.

GETTING OFF LINE

Percentage of women who say that they regularly meet their men through the Internet: 1. Percentage of women who meet their men through personals ads: 1. Who meet their men through singles groups: 2. Who meet their men through work or school: 31. Percentage who have dated a man they met online: 3. Percentage who say they wouldn't even consider dating a person that they met on the Net: 83. —ROBERT S. WIEDER

teed to forget. Situated in Santa Cruz, this herb hotel features rooms decorated in marijuana motifs, beds rolled in hemp sheets, bathrooms packed with hemp soap, a clothing-optional spa and organic breakfasts of hemp-seed pancakes. However, don't bother searching the Cannabliss room or looking for a ganja garden—guests must bring their own stash. Which makes this the only motel where we appreciate the roaches.

IMP PLANTS

Australian researchers suspect that some orchids mimic female wasp pheromones to attract male wasps. The wasps mistakenly fornicate with the flowers and the action aids in pollination. Dr. Florian Schiestl says the wasps don't benefit from the deception, as the time wasted with flowers could be spent mating with female wasps. No benefit? How about not having to cuddle afterward?

GASOLINE SALLY

We're thrilled to report that sex and the open road come together for the third annual Bad Girls Fast Cars Tour

IN THE MOOD

Norma Kamali is a sensible designer. So when we heard she made a mood bra, we had to check it out. It's supposed to change colors with body temperature. But even after we strapped it onto this fabulous co-worker and tried to change her temperature, nothing happened. When we got it off her, we noticed the area where our hands had been had the kind of rippled color that oil has on water. We were a little disappointed, but we're not complaining. We certainly like the look of the bra. It's just that we're not any closer to guessing the mood of anyone wearing it.

DISH OF THE MONTH

The An family allows only relatives in their secret kitchen when they're preparing the roast Dungeness crab with garlic noodles at their Crustacean restaurants in Beverly Hills and San Francisco. However, we detect that the recipe involves gobs of garlic, some sugar in the deliciously addictive noodles and—despite this being a Vietnamese dish—butter and Parmesan cheese. Whatever the formula is, it works. The two restaurants sell about 600 crabs a day. So don a bib, dive in and get your fingers messy. —SHARON BOORSTIN

2000, organized by erotic-fiction writer and car connoisseur Eva Morris. Her convoy of self-described Roadbabes will drive from Memphis to the Hamptons in New York, accompanied by a group of truck drivers. "There'll be a lot of flashing going on," Morris promises. Any woman with a car can sign up at road babe.com. Why the sliding scale that offers blondes a $10 entrance fee, while asking $12 of redheads and $15 of brunettes? "Brunettes will drive you crazy," she says. "I have to watch out for brunettes." We agree. We make a point of checking under the hoods.

UNBUTTON DOWN

Attention, casual girl Fridays. In a survey of 1000 companies by the law firm Jackson Lewis, a third of all employers said they noticed increases in flirting at the office after the institution of casual dress days. Employers also said they had noted increased absenteeism and late arrivals among the dressed-down set. That's apparently why, for the first time since 1992, the number of companies allowing casual dress declined this year.

BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY

A new book, *Love Bitter and Sweet* (Carroll & Graf), updates greeting card sentiments for today's rocky romantic landscape. Our favorite is great for urging women to step up to the mike: "Phallic is a sound/That's subtly trillable:/The accent's hard on/The second syllable."

HERBAL ECSTASY

Garlic bread—it's what's for dinner. According to a new study conducted by the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation, garlic can help treat dysfunctional families and tame insulting comments from men. In a test of 50 families that ate identical pasta meals, hostile comments from the "dominant male" dropped by 22.7 percent when garlic bread was served. "The smell of garlic bread may have induced nostalgic feelings of childhood," said Dr. Alan Hirsch, the study's director. He also proposed another scholarly theory: "The men may have been too busy eating the bread to insult anyone."

TALK THE TALK

Psychologist Anna Bernstein thinks men can screw up a date just by talking. She says there are three things to remember. Don't try to make your voice deeper ("The subliminal message is that there's something forced about him"). Don't talk too much about yourself ("Answer each question in the time it took to ask, then ask her a question"). And be natural ("Women want to hear signs that you are normal like they are. Let emotion show through your voice"). We'll add another: Never talk out of your ass. Follow these rules and you could be heading to the bedroom, where Bernstein suggests you use your lowest natural pitch and talk less. As if she had to tell us to shut up while we're ahead.

BABE OF THE MONTH

As Joey Potter, the object of Dawson Leery's affection on *Dawson's Creek*, doe-eyed **Katie Holmes** emits an effortless sex appeal. At her first professional audition, the 21-year-old cutie from Toledo landed a spot in Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm* as a drunken porty girl. She returned to Toledo to star in her high school's production of *Damn Yankees* instead of auditioning in Los Angeles when a callback came for *Dawson's Creek*. The producers rescheduled her audition and Katie has been climbing into Dawson's bedroom window ever since. She returned to the big screen and avoided being lobotomized in *Disturbing Behaviar*, got in a world of trouble in *Go*, contemploted murder in *Teaching Mrs. Tingle* and starred with Michael Douglas in *Wonder Boys*. You con catch Katie next alongside Keanu Reeves, Cate Blanchett and Greg Kinnear in the thriller *The Gift*.

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BE A PART OF IT!

Newport Rhythm and Sound Dance Contest

MY TICKET TO MIAMI BEACH!

❑ Mr. ❑ Mrs. ❑ Miss ❑ Ms. _____

Address _____ Apt.# _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone ( ) _____ - _____

What is your usual cigarette brand? _____ ❑ Menthol ❑ Non-Menthol
❑ Full Flavor ❑ Lights ❑ Ultra ❑ Mild/Medium ❑ None

By entering this contest and signing below, I certify that I am a smoker 21 years of age or older. I am willing to receive cigarette coupons and other promotional offers in the mail, subject to applicable state and federal law.

Signature (required) _____

Today's Date ____/____/ 2000 Your Birth Date (required) ____/____/____

NOT VALID WITHOUT SIGNATURE AND BIRTH DATE!

Mail to: Newport Rhythm & Sound Dance Contest, PO Box 4081, Grand Rapids, MN 55730-4081 30232

You must be a smoker 21 years or older to enter.

HERE'S HOW TO ENTER IN 3 EASY STEPS!

1. Videotape (VHS) yourself dancing with or without up to 1 other partner. Each dancer individually judged based on creativity and style.
2. Each contestant must fill out and sign their own official entry form.
3. Mail in entry form(s) and video together to be received by 12/15/00.

For events in your area or for more entry form(s) call toll free **1-877-744-1234** by 11/15/00.

We're takin' the winners to Miami Beach

To dance for $50,000 in Cash !

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. OPEN TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SMOKERS, 21 YEARS OR OLDER AT TIME OF ENTRY. VOID IN VIRGINIA AND TO VIRGINIA RESIDENTS. TO ENTER, complete an official entry form (hand-print only). Make a videotape (VHS format) of yourself dancing with or without a partner using your own original style. Contestant can have one (1) other dance partner in their video, but the additional parson must submit their own official entry form with the same video to be considered for entry. If two (2) contestants dance in the same video, each contestant will be judged on his/her own merits. One or both may or may not be judged a winner. IMPORTANT: Each contestant must include birth date and signature on entry form certifying he/she is a smoker, 21 years of age or older. **DANCE VIDEO MUST BE 1 MINUTE OR LESS (NO EXCEPTIONS)**. Include complete name and address of the individual(s) submitting antry(s) on all submission pieces. Mail fully completed official entry form(s) with the video in a padded envelope to: Newport Rhythm and Sound Dance Contest, P.O. Box 4081, Grand Rapids, MN 55730-4081. LIMIT: One video and two entries (1 per person) per envelope. All contest entries/videos must be received by 12/15/00. To receive an official entry form, call 1-877-744-1234 from a touch-tone telephone by 11:59pm (EST) on 11/15/00. Allow 2 weeks to receive official entry form. Incomplete or garbled phone requests, incomplete or illegible entries, entries without a signature or not including birth date will not be considered. No mechanicelly reproduced or photocopied entries permitted. Sponsor not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, damaged, illegible, incomplete, incorract, misrouted or postege-due entries/mail or damaged/inoperable videotapes. Entries/videos becoma the property of Sponsor and will not be returned.

JUDGING: Each contestant in the video will be renked on the following criteria: (a) Onginality/Creativity (1/2), and (b) Style/Presentetion (1/2). Contestants who earn the highest overall scores will win. In the event of a tie, winner will be selected based on the criteria of Onginality/Creativity. Video must contain contestant's own dance style and creation. Dance video must not have been entered in any other competition or violate the rights of other parbes. Videos may not be offensive, lewd or defamatory, es determined by the judges. Prizes will be awarded to the individuals who submit the videos and entry forms. Winner selection conducted by independent, qualified judges, whose decisions are final. Judging will be conducted on or about 12/18/00. Prize winner(s) will be notified by mail or phone and will be required to execute an Affidavit of Eligibility and a Liability/Publicity Release within 7 days of dete notice sent or prize may be forfeited. If prize, prize notification or attempted notificabon is returned undeliverable, prize will be forfeited and may be awarded to an alternate winner. Unclaimed prizes may not be awarded.

PRIZE(S): Each winner will receive one (1) of twenty (20) prizes consisting of a 4 day/3 night trip for two (winner and one guest) to Miami, Florida and the opportunity to compete against other winners from venous live dance competitions for one (1) of four (4) cash prizes: Grand prize - $20,000, first prize - $15,000, second prize - $10,000 and third prize - $5,000 in the Final Newport Rhythm and Sound Dance Contest on January 21, 2001. Trip includes: round trip coach air transportation from major airport near winner's home (at Sponsor's discretion), to Miami, Florida, ground transfers to and from Miami Airport, one (1) standard hotel room (double occupancy), and breakfast and dinner catered daily. Winner and guest must be able to travel between January 19 and 22, 2001, or prize will be forfeited and may be awarded to an alternate winner. All other unspecified expenses are winner's responsibility. Winner and guest must travel together. Winner and guest will be required to provide a copy of their driver's license or equivalent government issued photo identification prior to ticketing. Travel guest of winner must be 21 years or older and will be required to sign a Liability/Publicity Release. Additional restrictions may apply. (ARV: $3,500.00/trip, actual value may vary depending on departure location). No prize substitution or cash redemption allowed by winner(s). Prize(s) are not transferable. Taxes are the sole responsibility of each winner. Sponsor reserves the right to substitute prize with similar prize of equal or greater value due to prize unavailability. Entering the contest or acceptance of prize offered constitutes permission to use the contestants', winners', or guests' names and likenesses for commercial purposes without further notice or compensation unless prohibited by law. Limit one prize per person and two per household.

ELIGIBILITY: Open to legal U.S. residents, who are smokers, 21 years of age or older es of contest start date, except VA residents. Contest open to amateur dencers only. Professional dancers, dance instructors and any persons who have been paid for their dancing are not eligible. Employees of Sponsor, its parent, affiliates, subsidiaries, vendors, advertising and promotion agencies, and their immediate families and household members are not eligible to enter or attend as guests. By submitting an entry and video, contestant agreas to be bound by these Official Rules. Sponsor and its advertising and promotion agencies will have no liability in connection with the acceptance or use of the prizes awarded. Offer void in VA and where prohibited and subject to federal, stste and local laws. Lorillard Tobacco Company and its advertising and promotion agencies are not responsible for tachnical, hardware, software or telephone failure of any kind, or failed, incomplete, garbled telephone requests which may limit a contestant's ability to participele in the promotion. Sponsor reserves the right at its sofe discretion to disqualify any individual they find to be tampering with the 877 phone line entry request process or with the operation of the promotion. **FOR A WINNERS LIST**: Send a self-addressed, stamped business size (#10) envelope to: Newport Rhythm and Sound Dance Contest Winners, P.O. Box 337, Wilton, CT 06897-0337. Requests must be received by 12/15/00. **DO NOT SEND ANY OTHER CORRESPONDENCE OR ENTRIES/VIDEOS TO THIS ADDRESS. SPONSOR**: Lorillard Tobacco Company, P.O. Box 10529, Greensboro, NC 27404-0529.

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music

ROCK

THEY'RE YOUNG, they're talented, and girls like them. Hanson plays actual instruments, and the group hasn't hired a Las Vegas choreographer to turn themselves into soulless corporate weenies. ***This Time Around*** (Island) has more depth than the first album: simple chord structures, clever arrangements, catchy melodies and glorious singing. In the next few years we can hope for more surprises and greater emotional range. These guys could be around for the long run, because they appear to be unimpressed with their own stardom. In the meantime, give me youthful exuberance and hooks. —CHARLES M. YOUNG

Over three decades with King Crimson, Robert Fripp has inspired bands as diverse as Metallica and Phish with his heavy-metal thunder, jazz timing and avant-classical themes. ***The ConstruKction of Light*** (Virgin) is arguably Crimson's hardest-rocking effort ever. The tricky time signatures remain, but Fripp and co-guitarist Adrian Belew let it rip on searing instrumentals. Fripp's laserlike solos can shift from terrifyingly ominous to cosmically serene and back again in the space of one song. —VIC GARBARINI

HIP-HOP

Between praise and blame, it would be impossible to know that Eminem's ***The Marshall Mathers LP*** (Interscope) shares a theme with John Lennon's *Plastic Ono Band* and Kurt Cobain's *Nevermind*. Eminem's topic: the peril of maintaining an identity while trying to survive stardom. Eminem is the best white rapper ever, with serious flow and recklessly inventive rhyming skills. (Try rhyming urinal with funeral.) Dr. Dre's production is equal to the subtlety Phil Spector lent John Lennon. Eminem is angry, horrified at both his own hostility and the idea that anybody would want to emulate him. This accounts for the album's funniest parts and its most brutal ones, presuming you can tell the difference. Eminem considers the world crazy and dangerous, and his only method of coping is to respond in kind—which is exactly why he connects so deeply with his fans. —DAVE MARSH

Back in the Eighties, Chuck D of Public Enemy called hip-hop the CNN of the black community. Today, a lot of hip-hop (and its offspring, rap-rock) seems more inspired by Jerry Springer or Jenny Jones. If you've been hoping for the second coming of Public Enemy to blow away the boorish (and boring) trends in both rock and rap, your prayers have been answered. Chuck D and the controversial Professor Griff are back with a group, Confrontation Camp, and an album, ***Objects in the Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear*** (Artemis). C-Camp—a full band featuring two guitarists and a DJ—recaptures the intense vibe of early Public Enemy. Songs such as *Babies Makin' Babies Killin' Babies* and *Brake the Law* show how Chuck and Griff's perceptions have deepened. The music is a terrific blend of rap, funk and guitar mayhem. —VIC GARBARINI

DAVID CONLES

Hanson: *This Time Around*.

Hanson rocks,
Eminem rips and
Chuck D raps.

R&B

As a singer, Rachelle Ferrell's versatility is her greatest asset. She has a soaring style that fits between Dianne Reeves and the mainstream R&B of Anita Baker. On ***Individuality (Can I Be Me?)*** (Capitol), Ferrell is occasionally overwrought, but she's often compelling. The 11-song collection culminates in *I Can Explain*, an eight-minute composition where Ferrell shouts and murmurs with both grand overstatement and supple strength. —NELSON GEORGE

JAZZ

Dianne Reeves may have the most exotic vocal instrument in popular music today. Ostensibly a jazz singer, Reeves exhibits a tonal purity and richness that is dutifully controlled. On ***In the Moment*** (Blue Note), a live set, she's at her best when she scats, swoops and soars. The unexpected selections come off best, ranging from folk classics like *Morning Has Broken* and *Suzanne* to her Coltrane-like take on *Afro Blue*. —VIC GARBARINI

What was the greatest band of the 20th century? Forget the Beatles—it was Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and its subsequent incarnation, the Hot Seven. Working in Chicago from 1925 to 1929, these bands altered the course of popular music. With the extraordinary ***Complete Hot Five and Hot Seven Recordings*** (Legacy) it's easy to see why. The 89 cuts on this four-CD set show an amazingly sharp band burning with intensity. Armstrong's solos on *Tight Like This* and *Potato Head Blues* forged an entirely new musical idiom. And the man could sing too. Thanks to Legacy's meticulous sound restoration, this music is still red-hot 75 years later. —LEOPOLD FROEHLICH

COUNTRY

Fifteen songs, and only one clocks in at less than four minutes on ***Live at Antone's*** (Rounder) by Joe Ely. That's a lot of music for one CD—and all of it is brilliant. In his unique Tex-Mex way, Ely is a terrific songwriter. His band smokes, whether telling the story with flamenco accents of a fighting rooster or throttling a Buddy Holly standard. Born in 1947, Ely can't be accused of youthful exuberance. But he has something far more rare: middle-aged exuberance, and it's contagious. —CHARLES M. YOUNG

BLUES

Blues guitarist Ronnie Earl has made about a dozen albums, but ***Healing Time*** (Telarc) is the first memorable one. This all-instrumental set is the kind of blues heard in barroom jazz joints, as eloquently illustrated on *Churchin'*, featuring the great Jimmy McGriff on organ. Earl's command of his instrument is never in question and his version of Pharoah Sanders' *Thembi* is particularly daring and gorgeous. —DAVE MARSH

FOLK

Smithsonian Folkways' lavish 1997 version of 1952's *Anthology of American Folk Music* was one of the great CD repackages. It was an impeccable introduction to music that was infinitely influential. The original CDs are now joined by the previously unreleased ***Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music, Volume Four*** (Revenant Records, Box 162766, Austin, TX 78716). Harry Smith was the record

fast tracks

'N SYNC BATMITZVAH.COM DEPARTMENT: If you have the dough, you can do anything, and that includes hiring **'N Sync** to play at your daughter's bat mitzvah. That's exactly what the president of business affairs for AOL did. But before you slag the boy band, remember that the **Eagles, Toni Braxton, Beck** and **Hole** have also taken a few bucks to perform at private parties.

REELING AND ROCKING: **Babyface** and his wife will produce the music for *Josie and the Pussycats*, a movie satire about an all-girl band whose members are also detectives. . . . Seattle's Experience Music Project is showing weekly films of rare concert footage, artist interviews, archival film and movies. Screenings may also feature concerts performed by local and national musicians. . . . The Woodstock Film Festival runs from September 22 to 24 in the New York town made famous by **Dylan** and the **Band.** Look for music documentaries about **David Byrne** and **Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan,** among others.

NEWSBREAKS: Next year marks the tenth anniversary of **Nirvana's** *Nevermind*, and **Dave Grohl** and **Krist Novoselic** are assembling a boxed set to include unreleased material, outtakes, live recordings and videos. . . . Next month **Sam Shepard's** new play, *The Late Harry Moss*, opens in San Francisco, starring **Sean Penn, Woody Harrelson, Nick Nolte** and **Cheech Marin. T-Bone Burnett** created the music and sound, and Shepard will direct. . . . We knew **Phish** had devoted fans, but none charmed us more than the rabbi who followed the band from venue to venue last summer. The rabbi says, "In general, Phish's jams are like a metaphor for the search for truth." If that isn't enough for you, log on to gefilte fish.org for more. . . . Thirty-one years ago this past July, **Brian Jones** drowned in his pool. This summer, the pool tiles were auctioned off by Jones' fan club. . . . A historic tree in Annapolis, Maryland dating to colonial times was made into 224 guitars. The 400-year-old tree, damaged by Hurricane Floyd, is a tulip poplar. Taylor Guitars is producing the limited edition of 224, one for each year the tree stood after American independence. . . . Remember **Cynthia Plaster Caster,** the Sixties "artist" who immortalized the penises of **Jimi Hendrix** and **Anthony Newley,** among others, in plaster? Well, it's a new millennium, baby, and now she's casting famous breasts. **Suzi Gardner** of **L7** became the first to be immortalized for a documentary to be released next year. Says Gardner, "I'm a lucky gal to have my rack hanging in the same room with those rock cocks." . . . **Macy Gray** will appear on volume three of *Jazzmatazz*, **Guru's** series of hip-hop and jazz releases. Also, listen for **Erykah Badu,** the **Roots, Kelis** and **Angie Stone.** . . . **Willie Nelson's** summer Amsterdam concerts were filmed to be webcast on mcy.com this fall. . . . The **Supremes'** Motown boxed set is a four-CD, 88-song performance that includes unreleased material dating back to the days when they were the **Primettes.** . . . We hear **Moby** is thinking about providing the music for a TV commercial to be shown in China. That's cool, but guess who they're talking to? Mr. Counterculture himself, **Oliver Stone.** . . . Miller Freeman Books is about to publish *Michael Bloomfield: If You Love These Blues*, an oral history with a CD of rare tracks. If you want to know what really happened when Bob Dylan plugged in at Newport, read this. . . . Lastly, ex-Pumpkin **Billy Corgan** is ready to admit defeat: "It's hard to keep trying to fight the good fight against the **Britneys.**" We feel that way ourselves.

—BARBARA NELLIS

ROCK METER

	Christgau	Garbarini	George	Marsh	Young
Confrontation Camp *Objects in the Mirror*	7	8	7	8	8
Eminem *Marshall Mathers LP*	9	2	9	9	4
Rachelle Ferrell *Individuality*	7	9	7	5	6
Hanson *This Time Around*	3	6	7	5	7
Harry Smith's Anthology *Folk Music: Volume 4*	10	10	7	10	10

collector who conceived these compilations, and his unerring instinct for the great performance is why they still pack a punch. Most of the songs on this two-CD set were cut between 1935 and 1940, and the artists include the Carter Family, the Monroe Brothers, Leadbelly and Robert Johnson. The material on *Volume Four* is slightly easier on the unschooled modern ear. Most of the songs you don't know you'll love, and the ones you know sound dandy. Jesse James' *Casey Jones* beats even Furry Lewis' in the original *Anthology*. Buy *Volume Four* and soon you'll be springing for the more expensive original. Both are far more fun than history lessons are supposed to be.

An entirely different but equally effective reclamation is another follow-up: Billy Bragg and Wilco's ***Mermaid Avenue Vol. II*** (Elektra). The English punk-folkie and the American alt-country unit already released one collection of Woody Guthrie lyrics set to new music. So one would hardly expect a second album culled from the same sessions to match up. And, admittedly, this one is rougher, but it's just as captivating. Anyone who loves the first should start campaigning for volume three. —ROBERT CHRISTGAU

CLASSICAL

The Quatuor Mosaïques may be the best string quartet working today. The ensemble's latest release, Joseph Haydn's ***String Quartets Opus 76*** (Astrée), extends the mastery seen in its recordings of Mozart's *Prussian Quartets* and Haydn's *Opus 20* and *Opus 33*. In terms of accuracy and passion, this is chamber music at its finest. —LEOPOLD FROEHLICH

WORLD

Puerto Rico (Putumayo) is a lilting survey of salsa roots, mostly by San Juan–based revivalists. It makes a nice match with ***Tropicalia Essentials*** (Hip-O), showcasing the modernistic, Beatles-tinged Sixties work of contemporary samba titans Gilberto Gil and Caetano Veloso.

—ROBERT CHRISTGAU

King Sunny Ade, the Nigerian guitarist, helped introduce what became known as world music in the Seventies with a series of critically acclaimed albums and performances. Ade's infectious guitar-driven dance music draws not only on Nigerian juju rhythms, but on its transatlantic cousin, samba. ***Seven Degrees North*** (Mesa) is an engaging 10-track collection inspired by the West African religion, Yoruba. *Sijuade*, named after a powerful Yoruban deity, and *Ode Ma Ti P'Ogidan S'oko*, a poetic look at understanding one's limitations in life, are both standout tracks. —NELSON GEORGE

movies

By LEONARD MALTIN

PENÉLOPE CRUZ is so enchanting in ***Woman on Top*** (Fox Searchlight) that she almost makes the film worth watching. I say almost because there's little else to recommend about this wrongheaded romantic comedy. The gossamer-thin story centers on an introverted Brazilian woman who is cursed with severe motion sickness (which she can avoid only if she is in control—driving a car herself, or, more pointedly, being on top during sex) and blessed with the ability to cook magnificently. She marries an ardent lover who runs a restaurant, but in time she grows frustrated because he takes all the bows for her cooking and expresses his displeasure with being underneath her in bed by seeking other lovers. So she flees to San Francisco to hook up with a transvestite friend, and winds up hosting her own cooking show on TV. There is perhaps nothing more difficult to achieve in film than a modern-day fairy tale, telling a patently unbelievable story in concrete surroundings. Sorry to say, screenwriter Vera Blasi and director Fina Torres have failed. The movie looks great, and so do its stars—the charming Cruz and the handsome Murilo Benício. The Brazilian music helps, but not enough. *Woman on Top* resembles a punctured soufflé. ¥¥

•

Set in West Hollywood, ***The Broken Hearts Club: A Romantic Comedy*** (Sony Pictures Classics) is a frustrating hybrid. While director Greg Berlanti paints an immediate and tangible portrait of gay friends who continually snipe at one another about their love lives, the script falls too easily into the kind of stereotyping Berlanti mocks throughout the film. One character, in a rare moment of self-realization, admits that he and his friends spend all their waking moments talking about their gayness and doing little else with their lives. Their father figure, a genial restaurateur played by John Mahoney, advises one friend who has a terrible self-image—he feels he's surrounded by men who are more colorful and more attractive than he is—that "some people are gay and average." Wavering between cleverness and soap-opera dramatics, *The Broken Hearts Club* may be embraced by gay viewers who (like the characters in the film) are tired of Hollywood depictions of homosexual men as either victims or confidants of female stars. But when one character tells another, "I cannot be your Rice-A-Roni," referring to the ubiquitous consolation prize on Seventies game shows, one can only heave a sigh and wish that Berlanti weren't working so hard to make every line of dialogue so self-consciously clever. ¥¥½

Penélope Cruz really cooks.

A chef in love,
a yippie in hiding,
a mission to Coney Island.

•

A biographical film about Abbie Hoffman would seem to be a natural, and Vincent D'Onofrio is an ideal choice to play the youthful rebel who stirred things up in the late Sixties and early Seventies. But while ***Steal This Movie*** (Lions Gate) capably documents the highlights of Hoffman's career, it paints such a reverent portrait of the celebrated yippie that it becomes one-dimensional. Anyone old enough to remember Hoffman and his activities knows that he was far from angelic; many of his protests, though irreverent, were also destructive. That never enters the picture here. His story is pieced together in flashbacks as an older, more paranoid Hoffman tries to persuade a reporter to tell his story—including his longtime persecution by the U.S. government. Janeane Garofalo is effective as Hoffman's wife Anita,

FILMS FOR SALE

Given the junk that regularly turns up on movie screens and the sludge that makes its way onto video store shelves, it is startling that there are hundreds of movies filmed and completed every year in this country that never see the light of day.

Can they really be that bad?

The answer, in most cases, is no. The sadder truth is that many worthy films go begging for release because they aren't edgy or sexy or loud enough to make their way in today's competitive marketplace. When even a minor release can cost $25 million to open, it gives any distributor pause to take on a little movie with limited potential.

Just how many films are we talking about? Figure that about 300 movies make themselves known through conventional release channels every year; a good many of these never make their way past a handful of key U.S. cities. But the Motion Picture Association of America, which assigns ratings to movies, screened and rated 677 films last year. The Sundance Festival had more than 1000 feature-length submissions.

Filmmaker Doug Green completed his feature *The Hiding Place* two years ago. A small-scale story about a married man who must begin to deal with his mother's Alzheimer's disease, it benefits from sterling performances by its two leads: Kim Hunter and Timothy Bottoms. *The Hiding Place* has been screened at various festivals, but no one has acquired the picture.

Why? Because a modest drama is a tough sell in a theatrical marketplace that is dominated by Hollywood behemoths on the one hand and independents on the other.

Some people put their faith in the plan to develop a Sundance Cinema theater chain, which will create venues for specialized cinema across the country, especially in midsize cities where intelligent moviegoers aren't well served at present. But this project has been in the works for years. Meanwhile, good movies are languishing on the proverbial shelf.

The Shooting Gallery created its own distribution chain this year by releasing a handful of its independent movies for limited two-week runs. With little money for advertising, good reviews and word of mouth helped *Judy Berlin* find an audience, and Mike Hodges' *Croupier* actually took off. That's two happy endings.

For other filmmakers, we can only hope that a coast-to-coast, specialized-movie theater chain will come to pass. Soon. —L.M.

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Paradis found: A pop star on-screen.

OFF CAMERA

"A movie screen is worse than a mirror," says **Vanessa Paradis,** "because it's big, and it shows every single detail and all of the horrible things you hate about yourself."

But anyone who sees Paradis in Patrice Leconte's *The Girl on the Bridge* is sure to have a different point of view; her looks are unconventional, but there is something hypnotic about her face. The camera loves her.

Paradis is a newcomer to these shores, but at the age of 26 she has already played many roles in life—from teen star to pop diva to tabloid queen. Americans may know her best as the mother of Johnny Depp's child (Lily, who's one), or from a decade-old advertising campaign for Chanel's Coco perfume, in which she posed as a plumed vixen in a birdcage.

Paradis' fifth film is the first to receive major attention on this side of the Atlantic and is likely to win her awareness and respect as an actress. Her opening monolog—which runs eight script pages—is riveting. It was captured in one remarkable take, with two cameras. Her co-star, Daniel Auteuil, is one of France's leading actors, and he won a Cesar Award (the French equivalent of an Oscar) for his performance in this film. But Paradis beat him to the punch. She earned a Cesar as Most Promising Actress for her debut film, *Noce Blanche*, in 1989.

On a recent trip to Los Angeles, Paradis combined movie promotion and her music career, spending weeks in a recording studio working on her fourth album.

Having been in the limelight since the age of 14, Paradis is both self-assured and realistic about her life and work. "When you're 14 years old in an adult world, you have to go through a lot of mistakes and maybe pain, but it teaches you a lot. I think it makes you stronger."

—L.M.

and Jeanne Tripplehorn is good as the woman with whom Hoffman starts a new life while in hiding. D'Onofrio, as always, gives a vital and empathic performance, but this movie only skims the surface of what must have been an interesting life. ¥¥

•

Bertrand Tavernier is a world-class filmmaker (and film scholar) who became a major voice in French cinema with such pictures as *The Clockmaker*, *A Sunday in the Country* and the marvelous *Coup de Torchon*. Sad to say, his recent films haven't received much attention in the U.S., but a small distributor has acquired ***It All Starts Today*** (Entertech). Like other recent Tavernier efforts, this one is not about style but about content, and it deals, almost cinema verité, with contemporary life in France. The protagonist is a kindergarten principal in a poor mining town who strives against mighty odds (and an even mightier bureaucracy) to give the children in his care a proper education. His biggest challenge is not educational but social, dealing with neglected and abused youngsters whose parents are either absent, irresponsible or caught in the callousness and idiocies of the system. Tavernier wrote the screenplay with his daughter Tiffany and her husband, Dominique Sampiero, whose own experiences inspired the film. Straightforward in its telling, *It All Starts Today* is both vigorous and heartbreaking, a film of substance that reminds us how many of society's ills are worldwide in scope. ¥¥¥

•

Went to Coney Island on a Mission From God . . . Be Back by Five (Phaedra) is a breath of fresh air amid all the self-indulgent independent films we're seeing these days. Its director and co-writer, Richard Schenkman, has a sharp ear for dialogue and a good eye for the melancholy landscape of Coney Island, which resounds strongly with New Yorkers—like me—who remember it in its heyday. Jon Cryer (who co-wrote and co-produced the picture) and Ione Skye are the only recognizable names in the cast, but all of the actors deliver solid and believable performances in this story of boyhood friends whose lives haven't turned out as they had hoped. Two of them wind up spending a day wandering the boardwalk at Coney in search of a fellow musketeer who dropped out of sight years ago—and who, they've heard, was spotted among the homeless people in the neighborhood. The film doesn't present a story so much as a series of vignettes, in which even incidental characters have color, life and the unmistakable mark of truth. At turns moving and funny, *Went to Coney Island* is a satisfying slice of life. ¥¥¥

MOVIE SCORE CARD

capsule close-ups of current films
by leonard maltin

The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle (Listed only) Boomers who still cherish Jay Ward's cartoons may cut this more slack than others will. A benign comedy aimed mostly at kids, it does preserve the spirit of those cartoons, and features the incomparable voices of June Foray and Keith Scott as R&B. ¥¥½

The Broken Hearts Club: A Romantic Comedy (See review) Gay friends in West Hollywood spend most of their time needling each other—and trying to fix their jumbled love lives. ¥¥½

Chicken Run (Listed only) Nick Park and Peter Lord, the stop-motion-animation geniuses who've already won three Oscars, make a wonderful transition to feature films with this irresistible film about poultry POWs. Grown-ups will enjoy it just as much as kids—perhaps even more. ¥¥¥½

The Eyes of Tammy Faye (Listed only) This unexpectedly interesting documentary about Tammy Faye Bakker was a hit at Sundance—and is well worth seeing. ¥¥¥

It All Starts Today (See review) The great French filmmaker Bertrand Tavernier tells the wrenching story of a dedicated kindergarten principal in a small French town who fights the system for the sake of his children. ¥¥¥

Me, Myself and Irene (Listed only) Jim Carrey and the Farrelly Brothers hit rock bottom with a comedy so desperate to entertain that it goes in whatever direction seems handiest at the moment—from crudity to warmth and cuddliness to sheer repetition. ¥¥

The Perfect Storm (Listed only) If you can buy George Clooney as a grizzled sea salt who calls Mark Wahlberg "son," you can swallow the rest of the bilge in Bill Wittliff's script. At least the storm scenes are exciting. ¥¥½

Steal This Movie (See review) Vincent D'Onofrio is well cast as yippie Abbie Hoffman, but this biographical film never goes beneath the surface. Janeane Garofalo and Jeanne Tripplehorn co-star. ¥¥

Went to Coney Island on a Mission From God . . . Be Back by Five (See review) Jon Cryer stars in this poignant story about boyhood friends, set against the melancholy backdrop of Coney Island. ¥¥¥

Woman on Top (See review) Penélope Cruz is luminous, but this fairy tale about a Brazilian woman with a gift for cooking is strained and silly. ¥¥

¥¥¥¥ Don't miss ¥¥ Worth a look
¥¥¥ Good show ¥ Forget it

GUEST SHOT

"My favorite movie is *Braveheart*," says **C. Thomas Howell.** "I also love *Swingers* and *Good Will Hunting*, because I'm a real fan of Vince Vaughn and Matt Damon. Then there's *Stripes*. I love Bill Murray. He read an article where I said he was one of my favorite actors, and he went out of his way to locate me. When I was working on *Soul Man*, he helped me rework some lines. Then he wanted to meet Rae Dawn Chong, who I was going out with at the time. He said, 'Don't tell her I'm coming. I want to see what she's really like.' So naturally I told her and as soon as he walked onto the set she said, 'I hear you're doing a new movie and have a part for me.' I never heard from him again." —SUSAN KARLIN

THE COMPLEAT SHAKESPEARE

Welcome to class, class, where today we will attempt to get you through the major works of William Shakespeare without making you read Elizabethan English. Forget Cliffs Notes, we've got movies! But only the best versions for you, because there will be a test.

Hamlet (1996): The 1901 silent version isn't going to help you. The Kenneth Branagh version, updated to the late 19th century, is the only uncut and unabridged version of the text. It runs an hour longer than any of the others. Bard's line to use at next party: "My gorge rises at it."

Hamlet (1964): Branagh's actors rush their lines, but Richard Burton, at the peak of his abilities, enunciates like you wouldn't believe. It was shot with no scenery or costumes in front of a live audience. Bard's line to use at next party: "Man impresses not me."

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1935): OK, so these fairies make humans fall in love (but with the wrong people), and a guy named Bottom winds up with the head of an ass. But look at the cast: James Cagney, Mickey Rooney, Olivia de Havilland. Bard's line to use at next party: "Lord, what fools these mortals be."

Julius Caesar (1953): No, a gladiator named Maximus doesn't defend his honor. Marlon Brando was nominated Best Actor for using method acting as Marc Antony. Bard's line to use at next party: "Toga! Toga! Toga!"

Richard III (1954): The long monologs are mostly intact here, and imparted on unadorned sets, so you have no choice but to listen. Hang in there, because there's a killer battle scene at the end. Bard's line to use at next party: "I'll have her, but I'll not keep her long."

La Bisbetica Domata (1967): Franco Zeffirelli's Italian production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Here's a great idea: While you ogle Elizabeth Taylor at her buxomy best, choose the closed-captioned option on your DVD player so you can read along. Bard's line you must know: "Why, there's a wench!"

Henry V (1944): Filmed as if in the Globe Theater in 1600, this Laurence Olivier version was made as a morale booster for British commandos—which is why the spectacular battle was shot in Ireland with a cast of thousands. Bard's line to use at next party: "For he today who sheds his blood with me shall be my brother."

Othello (1981): Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins) is the Black Moor who is tricked by Bob Hoskins into slaying his wife. Shot on video by the BBC, with real English accents! Bard's line to use at next party: "Pleasure and action make the hours seem short." —BUZZ MCCLAIN

GUILTY PLEASURE OF THE MONTH

Gonzo porn is video erotica shorn of any conceit. It enjoys threadbare production values, women you've never seen before and hot and heavy action. Part of gonzo's appeal, when done right, is that it offers a sense of immediacy and authenticity often lacking in porn efforts that struggle with plot and, God help us, acting. Among its practitioners, the Brit Ben Dover is a master. Think of him as porn's Benny Hill. He's goofy, enthusiastic, wildly crude and sometimes very funny. This isn't art, it isn't really craft, either; it's sex as silly and stark as it gets.

DISC ALERT

"Tap! Tap! Tap!" The cry for ***This Is Spinal Tap*** on DVD has been answered in a feature-laden disc (MGM, $30) that, in the band's peculiar parlance, would seem to approach "11." A joyously droll career high point for director Rob Reiner starring Michael McKean, Christopher Guest and Harry Shearer, *This Is Spinal Tap* managed to poke fun at pop music's pretensions while simultaneously celebrating the simple fun of rock and roll. Much has been made over the years of people who saw the movie, dug the music and didn't get the joke. This new disc will only encourage further obfuscation, as McKean, Guest and Shearer offer running commentary in character, as David St. Hubbins, Nigel Tufnel and Derek Smalls, respectively. There's also an additional hour of footage, including an interview with Reiner, outtakes, trailers, TV spots, four music videos and—our favorite—Tap's appearance on *The Joe Franklin Show*. —GREGORY P. FAGAN

video mood meter

MOOD	MOVIE
DRAMA	***Erin Brockovich*** (Roberts as a real-life crusader who kicked electric company's ass; director Soderbergh elevates formula fare), ***Rules of Engagement*** (Tommy Lee Jones defends fellow jarhead Samuel Jackson; slick and engaging, if empty).
COMEDY	***High Fidelity*** (record-shop romantic John Cusack will never grow up; hilarious banter by clerks gives it its groove), ***Beautiful People*** (England, 1993; director Jasmin Dizdar amusingly links a series of hostile events to the Bosnian war).
SUSPENSE	***American Psycho*** (yuppie prince seeks release in homicide; a sharper-than-expected take on the Bret Easton Ellis book), ***The Ninth Gate*** (sleazy bibliophile Depp sees Satan in a book's details; stylish piffle from Roman Polanski).
MATINEE	***Romeo Must Die*** (innocent lovers Jet Li and Aaliyah find out their dads are at gang war; dumb hip-hop chop-socky fun), ***Final Destination*** (one kid foresees the doom as death itself stalks teens; smarter than, if not as funny as, the *Screams*).

wired

WIZARD FOR SALE

Whoever said slaying dragons is no way to make money didn't anticipate the Internet. Recently, those addicted to online role-playing games have been cashing in big, thanks to the popularity of titles such as EverQuest and Ultima Online. These multiplayer RPGs are virtual universes that allow users to move in worlds populated by monsters, villains and tens of thousands of other players, all in the guise of characters they have built over time—a lot of time. It can take 40 hours of fighting rats with a rusty sword before you move off the lowest level, and years to accumulate the attributes of a world conqueror. That is, unless you buy the

STEVE BOSWICK

powers. Skillful players who have built powerful characters are now auctioning them off for real money on eBay—a ploy frowned upon by gaming companies. Regardless, a search for the three big online games, EverQuest, Ultima Online and Asheron's Call, reveals hundreds of characters for sale, as well as the magical shields, helmets, etc. that make them strong. Some characters cost $1000 or more, and someone reportedly paid close to $40,000 for an impressively powerful wizard. And don't count on a clearance sale; characters and equipment from the original games will work in sequels such as EverQuest: Ruins of Kunark. —TED C. FISHMAN

MINIDISC GOES MP3

Need somewhere to store those MP3s you've collected from Napster? New minidisc players from Sharp and Sony will now store and play MP3s—and save you cash in the process. While portable MP3 players use expensive flash memory cards that hold around 30 minutes of CD-quality music and cost about $90, a blank minidisc can store 80 minutes of music for just $3. Plus, once they've been saved to a minidisc, you can listen to your favorite MP3s on any minidisc player, whether it's a Walkman, home stereo or car system. So what's the catch? To avoid nasty tangles with the Secure Digital Music Initiative (an industry forum with members that include AOL, Warner Music and Sony), MP3 files are converted from a digital to an analog signal. It's an arrangement sure to upset audiophiles, though some music lovers may be willing to compromise for the convenience and cost. Sony's $250 MZ-R70PC minidisc Walkman attaches to a PC with a USB cable and works with any Windows 98 or 2000 MP3 ripper or player, so there is no need to install additional software. Sony is also releasing the MZ-R37SPPC, a slightly larger unit for $200. Sharp's Internet minidisc package combines its MD-MT15 portable player-recorder with Voquette's NetLink software and NetLink Adapter USB cable for $250. The NetLink software can play and record MP3s and even capture other digital audio formats such as Real Audio, streaming MP3s and WAV files. The program can also convert e-mail and other text to speech and be scheduled to download a webcast or your favorite daily online talk show while you're away. That way you can save the file to minidisc and listen to what you missed later.

—JASON BUHRMESTER

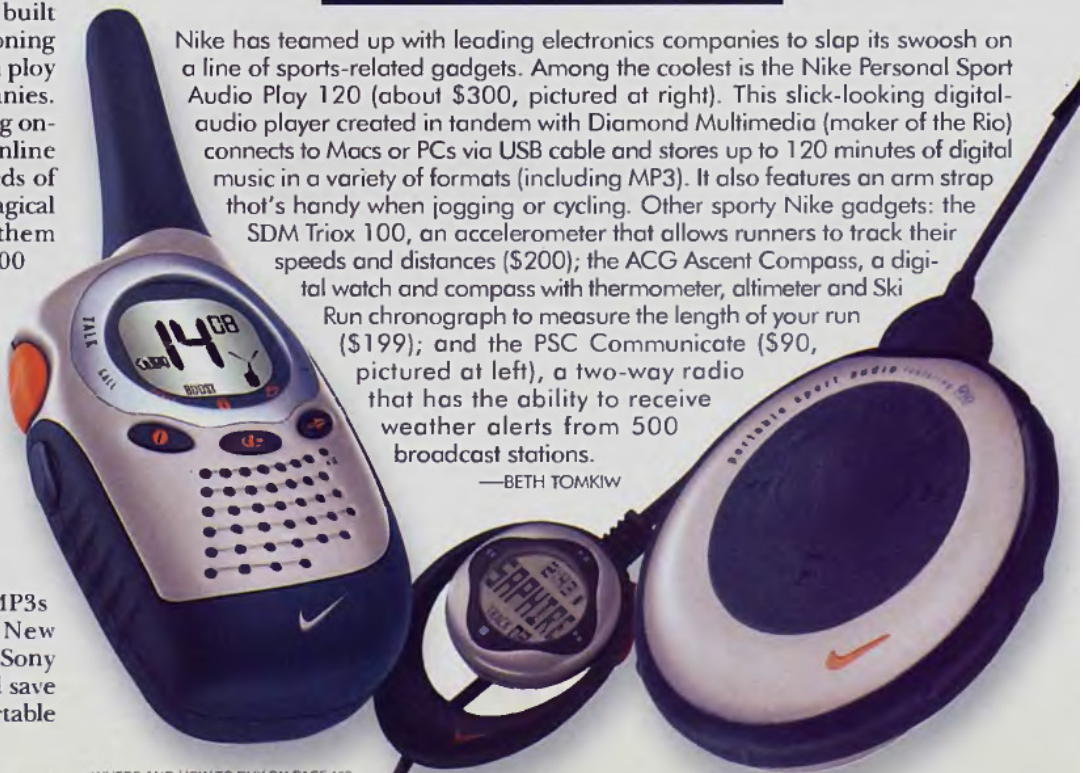
GAME OF THE MONTH

The **Ultimate Fighting Championship** has been released from pay-per-view purgatory. The virtually rule-free fighting tournament long banned from being staged in many parts of the U.S. is now available in game form for both Dreamcast and PlayStation. The game lets players create their own contestant or beat down opponents as one of 22 of the best UFC fighters, including Tito Ortiz, Jeremy Horn and Frank Shamrock. Each of the competitors has his own fighting style, be it jujitsu, kickboxing or old-fashioned freestyle brawling. And with 34 different disciplines and 3000 moves, UFC has plenty of ways to dish out a beating or to take one.—MARC SALTZMAN

WILD THINGS

Nike has teamed up with leading electronics companies to slap its swoosh on a line of sports-related gadgets. Among the coolest is the Nike Personal Sport Audio Play 120 (about $300, pictured at right). This slick-looking digital-audio player created in tandem with Diamond Multimedia (maker of the Rio) connects to Macs or PCs via USB cable and stores up to 120 minutes of digital music in a variety of formats (including MP3). It also features an arm strap that's handy when jogging or cycling. Other sporty Nike gadgets: the SDM Triox 100, an accelerometer that allows runners to track their speeds and distances ($200); the ACG Ascent Compass, a digital watch and compass with thermometer, altimeter and Ski Run chronograph to measure the length of your run ($199); and the PSC Communicate ($90, pictured at left), a two-way radio that has the ability to receive weather alerts from 500 broadcast stations.

—BETH TOMKIW



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By MARK FRAUENFELDER

THE DOT-COM DEADPOOL

Dozens of Internet startups with ridiculous business plans have burned through millions of dollars on marketing, lavish offices and exorbitant launch parties, becoming not-coms overnight. One company, Pixelon, blew at least $10 million on its launch party, even hiring the Who to play. While many investors gnash their teeth over their shrunken portfolios, others make a game out of the fading dot-com gold rush. At **fucked company.com**, players compete to see who can predict when the remaining dot-coms will tank. The site has become the de facto news source about ailing Internet companies, with lively discussion boards and snide news updates. So far, fuckedcompany's creator, a 24-year-old web designer named Philip Kaplan, has no plans to make a business out of his site. Too bad; fuckedcompany.com might turn out to be a real moneymaker.

MEDIA NUGGET

When you subscribe to Media Nugget, you are sent a daily e-mail message with a short review of one book, video, compact disc or website (along with a link to Amazon.com or another e-shop that sells the stuff). The editors' picks are usually offbeat: In the last couple of weeks they've written about Thomas Pynchon's first novel, *V*; Peter Sellers' 1979 movie *Being There*; Suetonius' first century A.D. history, *The 12 Caesars*; and a CD collection of the complete works of Johnny Mercer. The reviews are well-written introductions to their subjects, and are worth reading even if you aren't in the mood for buying anything. Sign up for the free e-mail list at **medianugget.com.**

THE HUMAN-POWERED DIRECTORY

The front page of About.com looks a little like Yahoo. It's a directory about sports, careers, games, travel, photography, etc. But unlike Yahoo, each of About.com's 700 different subject areas is hosted by a real person. The guides are knowledgeable and helpful. Each of them must take a four-week training program before they can host a section. For example, About.com's Home Recording guide is Kevin Becka, a recording engineer and editor of *Audio Media* magazine. On About.com's Home Recording site, Becka has a list of his favorite music-recording sites and an archive of his articles about maintaining a home-based recording studio. You can send e-mail to Becka, and he (or one of his associates) will answer your questions. Being a guide for About can be a lucrative gig—some guides make $10,000 to $15,000 a month. (Guides receive a cut of the net advertising revenue based on the number of users who visit their section.) If you're interested in becoming a guide for About.com, you can apply from the site. But don't order your Gulfstream yet—most guide applicants don't make the cut.

USELESS ASSISTANCE

Quixi.com charges users $20 a month to help them buy items online, find movie times, give them driving directions and connect them to their friends and associates on the phone. Quixi employs a staff of live helpers who will respond to your e-mail or phone requests. I tried signing up for Quixi's 30-day free trial, but when I filled out the form and hit the submit button, a note popped up informing me I would have to give my credit card information before it would give me an account. Forget it, not for a free trial. Besides, do I want to go through the hassle of contacting a helper to call my friend to connect me to him? No, I don't think so. And when I shop online, I like to compare prices, shipping options and features. I'm not about to trust a stranger to be as careful as I am with my money. If Quixi wants to be useful, it can fight my parking tickets, solve my bill disputes and stand in line at the post office. For that, I'll pay $20 a month.

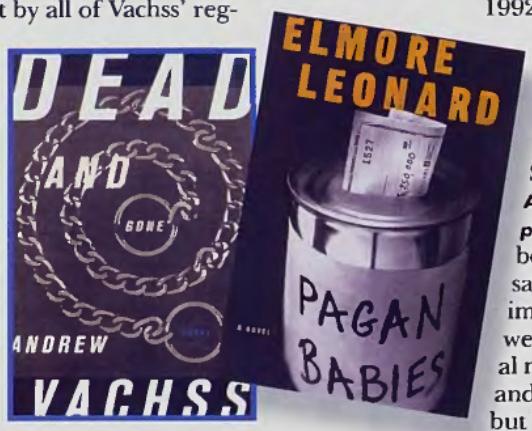
CARTOONS IN A FLASH

I've complained about streaming video on the web before. It's jerky and fuzzy and unpredictable. But animation on the web is wonderful, even with a 28.8 modem, thanks to a program called Flash, which delivers smooth, full-screen cartoons. (You can download the free Flash player from macromedia.com.) The funniest and best cartoons are on **Icebox.com**, a new webtoon studio that presents the talents of writers and animators from TV shows like *The Simpsons* and *South Park*. I like *Zombie College*, a sitcom by a couple of guys from *Futurama* and *King of the Hill*. On the Zombie campus, undead students feast on their lovers' brains for thrills. The shows get edgier (and more controversial) from there: Try *Hard Drinkin' Lincoln*, which portrays Honest Abe as a *(concluded on page 174)*

books

CRIME—COOL AND HOT

As crime novelists, Elmore Leonard and Andrew Vachss work opposite sides of the street. Leonard is cool and darkly hilarious; Vachss is red-hot and as serious as a punctured lung. The latter's new ***Dead and Gone*** (Knopf) has barely begun when Burke, Vachss' antihero, is set up and shot down. What follows is a feverish quest by all of Vachss' regulars to find and destroy the man behind the hit that cost Burke an eye and killed Pansy, his beloved mastiff. On the other hand, Leonard's ***Pagan Babies*** (Delacorte) is a little less direct. In Rwanda, a Hutu thug vows to kill Father Terry Dunn during the next tribal uprising. It's back to hometown Detroit for Terry, who is really no priest, merely a con man on the lam from a cigarette-smuggling rap. He meets a sexy ex-con who's struggling to launch a career as a stand-up comic. In true Leonard fashion, they conspire to sell a Motor City mafioso the idea of contributing $250,000 to feed the starving children of Rwanda. As it turns out, scamming the don is the easy part. The endings of both *Dead* and *Pagan* seem more arbitrary than organic, but that's all right. Thanks to Vachss' intensity and Leonard's twisted worldview, everything leading to them is pure reading pleasure. —DICK LOCHTE



MAGNIFICENT OBSESSIONS

If only beautiful blondes were as fond of drink ond sex in the real world as they ore in Candace Bushnell's *Sex and the City*, which inspired the HBO series. Her latest is ***Four Blondes*** (Atlantic Monthly), a collection of short stories obout Manhattanites whose escapades will make your own life seem tame. An aging model offers sexual favors to rich men in exchange for lodging in the Hamptons. A columnist becomes an alpha femole when her husband's coreer plateaus. A celebrity billed os Americo's Princess Di has bigger problems than bulimia—she's paranoid, too. A writer travels overseos to research sex in London only to discover the obvious—Americon men do it better. Like the HBO hussies, these women ore preoccupied with finding true love, but their hongovers often interfere with the manhunt. If you enjoy the show's observations about women ond sex as much as you enjoy looking ot Sarah Jessico Parker, pour yourself o cocktail and dig in. Maybe you'll get some pointers you can actually use.

—PATTY LAMBERTI

CELEBRITY CULTURE

Rock critic Greil Marcus traced a chalk outline around the legacy of Elvis Presley and found that it overlapped frequently with that of another Southerner—Bill Clinton. Marcus' latest book, ***Double Trouble: Bill Clinton and Elvis Presley in the Land of No Alternatives*** (Holt), collects previously published pieces from 1992 to 2000 that find Clinton crossing paths with the king of rock and roll. Marcus re-creates the strikingly similar patterns each man followed, culling public trust and esteem while simultaneously compromising it—an irony, Marcus concludes, that American society chooses to ignore. Presley also pops up in *San Francisco Examiner* and Salon.com columnist Cintra Wilson's collection of essays, ***A Massive Swelling: Celebrity Reexamined as a Grotesque, Crippling Disease and Other Cultural Revelations*** (Viking). Of the book's 16 rants against celebrity adulation, the best barb is saved for Presley. As Wilson explains, society savored the image of Presley "even though he was not the same guy who went to the Army or married Priscilla or gleamed like sexual mercury on the black-and-white screen, but mainly an unhappy, fat Southerner, spaced out on Demerol." Wilson also makes quick work of a roll call of stars whom she sees as swelling up, including Courtney Love, Celine Dion, Bruce Willis, Michael Jackson and "the monster that started it all," Barbra Streisand. By *Massive Swelling*'s end, Wilson has built a formidable case about the toxicity of fame. She has us convinced. —JASON BUHRMESTER

ABBE SENNETT

CAPITAL IDEA

An entertaining, hard-boiled novel about political corruption, ***Our Man in Washington*** (Forge) by Roy Hoopes is history with a twist. Literary men H.L. Mencken and James M. Cain work as detectives to ferret out sex scandals and the like in the Harding administration. —HELEN FRANGOULIS

BATTER UP:
Everybody talks about the ball, but you con't play baseball without o piece of lumber. Bob Hill's ***Crack of the Bat: The Louisville Slugger Story*** (Sports Publishing) wonderfully details the history of Hillerich and Brodsby, the Kentucky company thot hos mode more than 100 million boseboll bots over the post century. The right bat is like a Stradivarius to o ballployer. No wonder Ted Williams used to climb through the H&B woodpiles looking for the perfect piece of white ash. —LEOPOLD FROEHLICH

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PIT FIGHTING

John Lober and Izzy Johnson size each other up, two panthers wearing black shorts, fingerless padded gloves and wrestling shoes. Lober, a.k.a. the Machine, has his nickname tattooed across his stomach in four-inch-high letters. Johnson endures eight hours of ring work per day and has fists the size of grapefruit. Lober and Johnson—trained in multiple martial arts—can inflict horrendous pain. They circle each other in the ring—an octagon in a southern California bingo pit. They are breaking the law.

The audience is mostly thuggish men in sweatshirts and stocking caps. There are three conspicuous exceptions: a hard-ridden porn star in the front row and tonight's ring girls, two buxom blondes in butt floss. The spectators were informed of the fight's location the night before by telephone. Most of them stand close to the octagon. The rest are sardined on an adjacent staircase and balcony. Despite the short notice, sponsor banners from a handful of California skate companies hang above their heads.

David "Tank" Abbott (pictured above), who participates in World Championship Wrestling, has had a lust for violence since he was a kid. Here he shows his pit-fighting opponent who's on top. "I think this photo shows that it's truly no-holds-barred," he says. Far right: When John "the Machine" Lober (on top) and Izzy Johnson are finished roughing each other up, all that's left is a bloody pit. Right: Johnson and Lober—no hard feelings.

The fighters unleash. Through the short, calculated moves of hands and feet, Johnson bursts out with a powerful jab to the face. Unshaken, Lober lunges at his legs and the two tumble to the mat. Johnson gets Lober in a guillotine headlock, the back of his neck in Johnson's armpit, his cheek against Johnson's lat.

That's when Lober's nose explodes. He snorts out blood, turning the canvas into a Rorschach test. As they drag each other across the ring, the fighters become a mass of entangled muscles, two crabs fighting for a mate. Still bleeding from the nose, Lober clenches Johnson's straightened arm and neck. It looks as if Johnson is stuck in a car sunroof.

A few years ago, tough guys with a jones for kicking ass signed up for the Ultimate Fighting Championship, a gnarly sport in which the only rules are no biting and no eye gouging. But now that Ultimate Fighting is sanctioned in only five states—Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia—no-holds-barred brawling has moved underground.

"John Lober is famous for his tolerance for pain," says Mel Potts, the fight's promoter. "One time in Japan, John and his opponent had each other in ankle locks, trying to get each other to submit. John's leg breaks and spins around, both bones obviously broken. You hear the snap, you see the break, you see his leg turn all the way around, but John doesn't stop because he's not aware it has happened. The other fighter had to stop the fight, explaining that he'd just broken John's leg. It nauseated me. It's scary to see someone fighting at that intensity level."

Potts organizes illegal pit fights under the moniker West Coast No-Holds-Barred Championship. To keep things interesting between bouts, he stages "ultimate catfights" between untrained, barely clothed women fighters. Potts spreads the word about upcoming events through a select mailing list, culled from martial arts dojos and fighting organizations. He sells tickets in advance, with date, time and approximate location. The night before, 10 people with an exact address make hundreds of phone calls. Then two men enter the ring, two men leave it, both covered in blood, one victorious, one staggering.

"Pit fighting is the closest thing to fighting in its purest form," says David "Tank" Abbott. Abbott is a former Ultimate Fighting champion who now fights for the WCW. "I've had a lust for violence since I was a kid. Fighting is in my blood, in my heart and soul. I am a pit fighter. If I'm going to fight you, I'm going to hurt you. This isn't a controlled dojo environment." (For more pit-fighting mayhem, go to playboy.com.)

—CHAUNCEY HOLLINGSWORTH

THE CLASS OF 2001

By ASA BABER

YOU GUYS graduating from college soon have to be special. After all, they named the movie *2001* after you, and that was more than a decade before you were born. Most of you came into this crazy world around 1980, so to show you that the only things you can count on in life are change and flux, here are some statistics from that fateful year:

In 1980 the U.S. experienced an annual inflation rate of 13.5 percent. Mortgage rates exceeded 20 percent and unemployment stood at 7.1 percent. A BMW 320 cost $12,000 and the Dow Jones industrial average had a high of 1000 and a low of 759. Gold hit $880 per ounce on the commodities markets. It was also the year of the bull. The mechanical bull, that is, like the one Debra Winger rode in *Urban Cowboy*. The Sony Walkman, the Rubik's Cube and designer jeans also became fads as you were burping in your crib. Cordless telephones appeared, as did Ted Turner's CNN and the 3D calculator.

You may have been born in 1980, but some famous people died that year. John Lennon was assassinated by Mark Chapman. Alfred Hitchcock passed away, as did Mae West, Steve McQueen and Peter Sellers. J.R. (of TV's hit show *Dallas*) was shot and almost died.

The movies *Raging Bull*, *Ordinary People* and *The Shining* opened in 1980. *Lou Grant* won an Emmy, as did *Taxi*, and *Donahue* became the most-watched TV talk show in America. (This was in those innocent years before Oprah cleaned Phil's clock.)

In the midst of all this hype and hope, many of you were born, kicking and screaming, unaware that in the year 2001 you would be finishing college and hoping to begin a career. So enough of this nostalgia. What you want to know—nay, honorable members of the class of 2001, what you need to know—is what will happen to you over the next decade as you try to get started. You have come to the right place, because I have seen what is in the cards for you, and it is definitely a terrifying prospect. So get ready for some futureball!

2001: It is revealed in May 2001 that the transcripts of all current college seniors have disappeared. Officially, the class of 2001 does not exist. Seniors who hoped to graduate will have to repeat four years to win a college diploma—or, as an alternative, pledge 80 percent of their future earnings to their college alumni association fund, which will allow them to earn their degree on time.

How does this transcript disaster occur? In a fit of pique, coach Bobby Knight of Indiana University vents his anger in early spring by secretly sending a computer virus around the country that erases the records of the senior class only. "I picked on the class of 2001 because I hated the movie," Knight is quoted as saying, "and I don't like odd-numbered years."

2002: The FBI announces that all members of the class of 2001 have been under government surveillance since birth. "It is probably the most complete intrusion into the personal lives of our citizens in our history," testifies FBI director Robin Williams (former actor and Democratic Party fund-raiser). "Privacy for those perverts never existed. We call them the *Truman Show* generation, and you should see the videotapes we made of them on their spring break in 2001. Naked hooters, naked butts, no discipline! I was shocked, I tell you, shocked out of my shorts."

2003: In the throes of an economic downturn, Congress decrees all college graduates from the year 2001 must repay their student loans immediately. There can be no exceptions, and a lawsuit opposing this congressional action is squashed by the U.S. Supreme Court. "We need the money pronto," says Senator Monica Lewinsky (R.–Utah), "and we feel the class of 2001 has had enough time to get its finances together so that it can help us. Yes, we are focusing on them specifically and not asking anybody else to ante up, but so what? Any graduating class that has a movie named after it deserves some grief. If those people pay up, none of the rest of us will have to do the same."

2004: The graduating class of 2004 votes to target the class of 2001 for ridicule and abuse for the rest of eternity. "It's a national campaign," says Jay Smith, president of the Hate the Class of 2001 Foundation, "and while it may sound like a completely unfair and irrational plan, I think we all know that the class of 2001 is despised by most Americans. Why? Who can say? Some things can't be explained logically, you know."

2005: Nothing important happens.

2006: One member of the class of 2001 wins a state lottery worth millions of dollars, but nobody else from the class wins anything anywhere.

2007: The Second Mexican War begins when San Diego is invaded from the south by a congregation of drug dealers and tequila-drinking aliens from Mars. Every member of the class of 2001, male or female, receives a draft notice within days from Uncle Sam. "These people from the class of 2001 have been out of college for six years now," says Drew Barrymore, selective-service administrator, "and we think it is time to teach them a lesson. Better to choose one year's crop of graduates to shoulder the burden of military service while the rest of the nation continues shopping and partying and networking," she laughs.

2008: The Second Mexican War ends successfully. For whom? Good question.

2009: The class of 2001 strikes back, although feebly at first. It organizes a petition protesting the treatment it has received. It holds a rally in Washington, D.C. covered by C-SPAN and National Public Radio. And it is the subject of a PBS television special, directed by Woody Allen, titled *Get Lost, Albatross*, which outlines the dark fate that the class of 2001 has encountered. "When I look at what's happened to those guys from that class," Allen says, "I feel a little less sorry for myself."

2010: A slow year, marked only by China's invasion of India, the biological contamination of Texas and the loss of the rest of ozone layer over the Antarctic.

2011: Ten years out, and victory for the class of 2001! In a dramatic reversal of fortune, America opens its arms to these dear people who have suffered so much indignation and calumny. On January 1, 2011, President Ricky Martin declares all members of the class of 2001 genuine American heroes and awards them each an annual stipend of $500,000. "They've been living *la vida loca* without any support or recognition for the longest time," President Martin states, "so I hereby decree an end to yearism. No one should be persecuted because he or she graduated from college in a particular year. Not even those unrepentant slobs from the class of 2001!"

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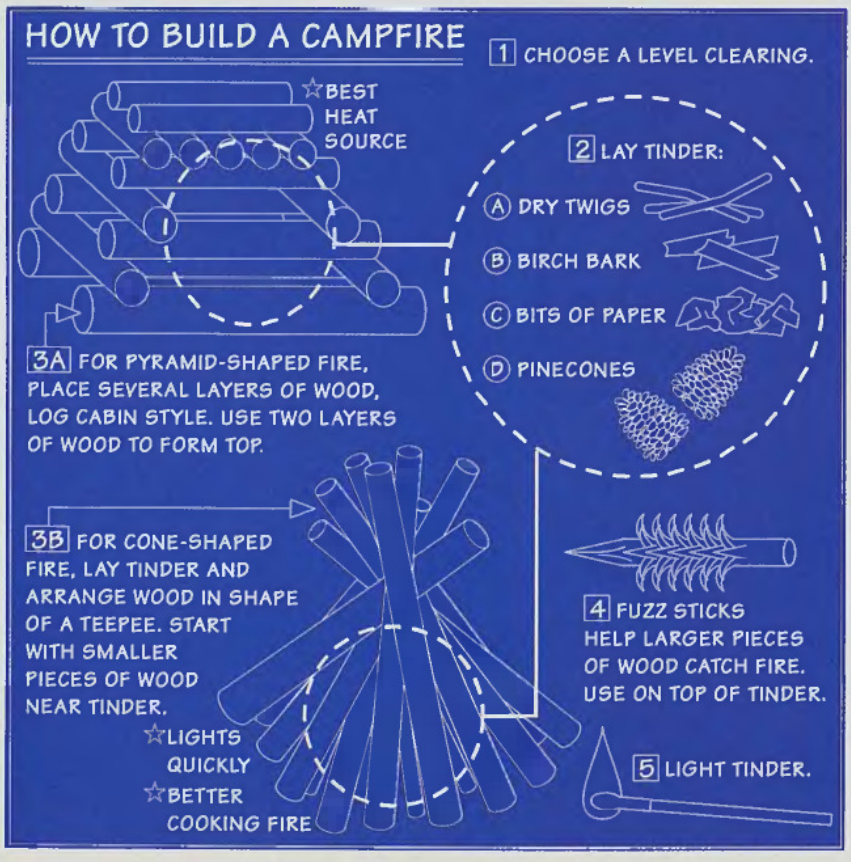
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MANTRACK

Brave New World Wineglasses

Georg Riedel's Vinum Extreme collection (shown here are glasses for cabernet sauvignon/merlot/cabernet franc, chardonnay and pinot noir/nebbiolo) is designed for what he terms New World wines—such as those from California. These have diamond-shaped bowls that angle out dramatically before narrowing at the top—thus creating exceptionally wide surfaces for evaporation. New World wines have "aromas that can sometimes be overwhelming; Vinum Extreme glasses balance their intensity and the quality of their flavors," Riedel explains. Or, as a wine expert friend of ours remarked, "You mean it takes away the oak [a flavor much abused in California]?" Exactly.

Gourmet Pizza

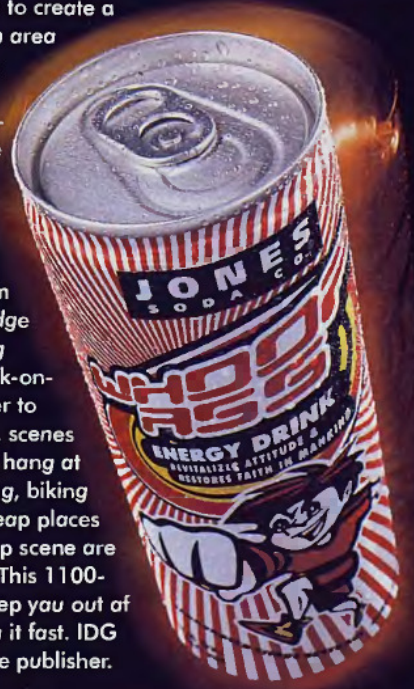
James McNair's New Pizza: Foolproof Techniques and Fabulous Recipes (Chronicle) walks you through the techniques of mixing, stretching, topping and baking an impressive array of pizzas. Included are classics such as Chicago-style deep-dish sousage and the elegant and simple tomato-basil pie. But McNair also shows you how to whip up a tandoori chicken pizza, three-caviar pizzettes and even an apple–triple crema pizza. The one pictured above is the zucchini-stuffed deep-dish, and it's a killer. Getting nervous, Domino's?

Clothesline: Jon Stewart and Vince McMahon

Jon Stewart (left), host of Comedy Central's *Daily Show* and *Indecision 2000*, its presidential election show, defines his personal style as, "Is that clean? It's dirty? Well, does it look dirty or cleon? It looks clean? OK, I'll wear thot." His favorite place to shop, he says, is a TV show because "they bring you suits and you get to keep a few. Especially if you're an odd size, perhaps smoller than average, and there are alterations. Then you definitely get to keep some." Vince McMahon (right), chairman of the World Wrestling Federation, has a 50-inch chest and a 35-inch waist, both the result of many years of training, so he has to have his clothes custom made. "I hove a couple of guys who create what I like. Most of the clothes I see in magazines won't fit me." (He's 6'2" and 230 pounds.) McMahon's casualwear is really casual—"It's gym clothes."

Guys Are Talking About . . .

Energy drinks with attitude. Remember the scene in *There's Something About Mary* where Mary's stepfather says, "Don't make me open up a can of whoop-ass"? Whoop Ass really exists (below), and the Jones Soda Co.'s now-famous energy drink does kick ass. Contact fusion.com for a case of 12 of the 8.4-ounce cans. The cost is $21.95, and you don't want to know the ingredients. • *Luxury air travel.* The new first-class Flagship Suites on American Airlines' Boeing 777s to Europe and some South American destinations include seats that recline into 6'6" beds. They also swivel to create a dining or conversation area for four. • *Internet tee times.* Book4golf.com offers "Tee times. Anywhere. Any time." The bookings are limited to North America but they can be reserved via the Internet 24 hours a day, even from overseas. • *Cutting-edge urban guides.* *Hanging Out in Europe* is a walk-on-the-wild-side Baedeker to Europe's hottest cities, scenes and parties. Where to hang at 4:00 A.M., great skating, biking and jogging spots, cheap places to crash and the pickup scene are the tamer categories. This 1100-page softcover can keep you out of trouble or get you into it fast. IDG Books Worldwide is the publisher. The price: about $21.



WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 168.

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The Playboy Advisor

Once or twice a week my friends and I go out to lunch. Sometimes we'll see a girl and somebody will say, "I wouldn't sleep with her, but I'd let her blow me." Do women say the same sort of thing about guys? That is, do they see an attractive man and say, "I wouldn't sleep with him, but I would let him go down on me"? Please survey some women and let us know the results.—T.W., Raleigh, North Carolina

What women say is, "I wouldn't sleep with him, but I'd let him spend money on me." (Ouch.) In general, women don't differentiate between oral sex and intercourse—each is considered equally intimate—so a man judged worthy of cunnilingus is suitable for fucking by default. Marcelle Karp, editor of Bust magazine, says the women she hangs with might announce something like, "I wish I had 15 minutes alone with that" when a beautiful guy walks by, but they rarely get more specific. Nikol Lohr of Disgruntled Housewife.com says her friends have been known to say, "I wouldn't want to hang out with him, but I'd fuck him." Hearing that, we feel objectified—and disappointed we haven't met Nikol's friends.

Why do airlines require that you show photo ID when you check in? The security questions they ask, such as "Have your bags been out of your control since you packed?" are a waste of time. Wouldn't a terrorist just lie? If you were intent on blowing up a plane, you probably could manage to get a fake ID.—R.F., San Francisco, California

There's no law requiring airline passengers to show identification. The Federal Aviation Administration only requires that airlines ask for identification. If a passenger doesn't have his papers in order, the FAA mandates that airlines apply additional scrutiny to his bags. So why do airlines insist on ID? Because it ensures that you're not flying on someone else's nonrefundable ticket, which boosts their bottom line. When you're turned away, they can say that ID is required for security reasons, but it's their own security, not a standard established by the government. The FAA says the two questions it requires counter clerks to ask aren't designed to trip up terrorists but to encourage passengers to think about where their bags have been. It cites at least four cases where bombs were planted in the luggage of unsuspecting travelers. If you reply "yes" to either question, your bags will receive extra scrutiny but the airlines are not required to keep you or your belongings off the plane.

I play basketball once a week in a city league. I tell myself it's just exercise, but I'm always depressed after a loss. Sometimes this mood continues to the next

day. When we win, I'm a friendly guy, congratulating the other team on their play, commiserating about the officiating, probably annoying them as much as cheerful winners annoy me when we lose. Is there some biological explanation for this, or am I simply two-faced and too competitive?—P.W., Chicago, Illinois

Your reaction is natural. Your body anticipates the competition and produces more testosterone during the hours before tip-off. The surge increases your concentration, confidence and aggressiveness. If you win, your body maintains the higher level of testosterone. If you lose, the level returns to normal. The surge is most pronounced when the outcome is in doubt. "If a player is positive he's going to defeat his opponent, he won't get the rise," explains Alan Booth, a sociologist at Penn State University who has studied hormone levels in wrestlers and tennis players. The drop in testosterone isn't all bad—your body is telling you to rest and heal. The winner, meanwhile, must be ready for the next challenger (consider how tournaments are structured). Researchers have recorded these fluctuations even among men playing chess, and also among male spectators. Testosterone doesn't completely explain your moods—some guys are just better at losing than others. In our experience, the most gracious competitors are those who don't view their time on the floor as a way to prove their manhood off the floor.

What is clit pumping?—B.J., Seattle, Washington

It resembles penis pumping, but you need a better eye. The practice draws blood to the clitoris, which increases sensitivity and lubrication. Earlier this year, the FDA approved a $360 device called Eros-CTD to assist women with sexual arousal disorder. It consists of a suction cup and a palm-size, battery-operated pump. But some women have been pumping for years. You'll find details in The Ultimate Guide to Strap-On Sex, by Karlyn Lotney, or at www.fairybutch.com. Lotney reports that women have pumped their clits up to four and a half inches long and five inches around. That's the extreme; in most cases, pumping is viewed as occasional kinky fun. "Most men have about six inches of erectile tissue, and so do most women. It's just not as easy to see," she says. "Pumping makes the clitoral shaft stand out in broad relief, which makes it easier for a partner to find and caress." Some women reach orgasm from the pump's sucking sensation; others find it intensifies the pleasure of oral sex after the cup is removed. Clit pumping can be hazardous, so women who attempt it should proceed carefully and stop immediately if they feel pain. Lotney suggests that beginners experiment with the yellow rubber suction cups found in snakebite kits. "Lubricate one of the suckers, squeeze it together around the flesh of your clitoris, and let go. The sucker will stay in place until you squeeze it again to break the suction." While a snakebite sucker is less intense than vacuum pumps, Lotney recommends not leaving it on your genitals for more than a few minutes at a time until you have more experience with the sensation.

My husband and I have been married for 31 years but until six months ago had never tried anal sex. What a mistake. We still enjoy regular intercourse but now include anal as a treat. It's the only way my husband can get off more than twice in a night, and I lose count of how many times I climax. I was reluctant at first because I'd heard it hurts. I also heard that it's unnatural, and that "only perverts do it." What a crock. My husband had mentioned it and we watched pornos that included anal scenes, but he never forced the issue. I love doggy-style, so I guess it was only a matter of time before I wanted to try something new. We started slow and used lots of lube, common sense and love. One finger, then two, then a dildo, then a butt plug, then a vibrator. And then the real thing, with a condom. I can't describe the sensations the first time I felt my husband in my ass. He also was overcome with pleasure. Now I sometimes use a vibrator (he enjoys the vibrations, too) or masturbate while he is in my ass (with no fear of poking him with my nails). I also play with his anus while giving him blow jobs. Why has there been such a taboo against anal sex? I understand that there are manuscripts

ILLUSTRATION BY ISTVAN BANYAI

dating back thousands of years detailing its pleasures. When two people share their bodies with so much mutual pleasure, how can it be considered bad?—J.W., Grand Junction, Colorado

You won't get an argument from us. It's always a pleasure to meet a woman who has your confidence. We're taught as children that our assholes are anything but erotic. Many happy lovers learn otherwise as adults—the anus is full of nerve endings. A survey of PLAYBOY *readers in the early Eighties found that 60 percent of single or married women and 70 percent of divorced or remarried women had tried anal sex. Early church leaders discouraged anal sex because it prevented procreation, and because it was associated with male homosexuality. Today, a dozen U.S. states still ban heterosexual anal sex, and you'll find only two worthwhile books on the topic: Anal Pleasure and Health, by Jack Morin, and The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women, by Tristan Taormino. As you know, the anus doesn't self-lubricate like the vagina and isn't as pliable. That's why it's important to build up to full penetration and use plenty of lube. Sharing the love helps as well, because the act requires a great deal of trust.*

I frequent a cigar bar that doesn't carry my favorite brand. Would it be improper to bring my own cigars to smoke?—M.E., Lincoln, Nebraska

It's OK to bring your own cigars, particularly if the bar doesn't stock your brand, but be sure to buy a drink.

There's been a lot of press lately about the "average" guy. I've read that the average straight guy has 12 sex partners in his life, while the average woman has three. How is that possible? Even if there is a small percentage of women who have hundreds of partners, that still raises the average of the average woman.—E.M., Columbus, Ohio

Social scientists encounter this discrepancy frequently when they ask men and women how many partners they've had in their lifetimes. However, the discrepancy all but disappears when researchers narrow the focus to the previous year. In other words, our memories can be imprecise. Two researchers addressed this issue last year in the Journal of Sex Research. After asking 1800 college students how many sexual partners they'd had and how they arrived at that number, they concluded that men and women generally use different calculation strategies. Sexually promiscuous people usually don't keep a running tally, so when they're asked to come up with one, they take their best guess. Women tend to produce as accurate a count as possible, but they also underestimate. Men tend to make rough guesses, which skew upward. Cultural factors also play a role. Men may subconsciously exaggerate to appear macho, while women may understate to avoid being judged as promiscuous.

Each summer, I drag a recliner into the woods near my house. When I feel horny, I sit in the chair in the nude and spray insect repellent everywhere on my body except my genitals. Is this normal?—G.B., Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Have you seen any other chairs out there?

Last night my girlfriend and I had a threesome with a male friend. It went well. But now that a day has passed I don't feel right emotionally. She says she wants only me, but I still have this pain of having seen her with another man. I fear it will eat me alive and destroy our relationship. How do I cope? Does this make my girlfriend a slut and me a loser for allowing it to happen?—J.G., Omaha, Nebraska

Of course not. Many people who arrange a threesome find it's not to their liking. You only have to watch one scene in The Girl Next Door, a documentary about porn star Stacy Valentine, to understand how unexpected emotions can frustrate a person in that situation. In the film, Valentine moves in with a male porn star. Soon after, they do a movie together. These are people who fuck strangers for a living, yet during a scene in which Valentine has oral sex and intercourse with another actor, her live-in boyfriend can only sit motionless on the bed, staring in disbelief. He's in love with her, and it's obviously painful for him to watch the live action of what he had previously seen only on a television screen. Their relationship crumbles in part because of the stress of that episode. Threesomes can be wild adventures, but they also have the potential to cause anxiety. Even when a couple discusses the situation beforehand, it's hard to predict how an individual will respond (you also have a third party involved, which adds more uncertainty). Many men find it arousing to watch their lovers with another guy. You're not one of them, apparently, but there's no reason to take it out on your girlfriend. She wasn't with another guy—she was with you and another guy. Big difference.

Can you explain how to "short" a stock? It sounds lucrative.—E.A., Richardson, Texas

It can be. You're familiar with the long buy—buy low and sell high. You also may be familiar with the Advisor method—buy high and sell low (not recommended). To short a stock, you borrow high and sell low. If an investor chooses a stock that's on the uptick but that he believes is going to fall in value, he then borrows shares through his broker from investors who own the stock (the broker charges a commission plus interest for the transaction, and the short seller must pay any dividends that the shares would have produced). If everything goes according to plan and the price drops, the short seller repurchases the same number of shares at a lower price and returns them to the broker, pocketing the difference. Naturally, there are risks. With a long buy, you can lose only as much as you invest. A short seller can lose that and more—if a stock goes up instead of down, he has to replace the shares at a higher price. He also could be squeezed. That occurs when another investor recognizes that a stock has a lot of short positions. She buys up the stock to drive the price higher. The short sellers scramble to buy, which drives it even higher. You also may get squeezed if your broker needs to return the stock and doesn't have other shares to lend. In short, short selling isn't for beginners.

How can you determine the best time to open a bottle of wine?—L.A., Honolulu, Hawaii

There's no formula. Each bottle is different. Most ordinary table wines are made available when they're ready to drink. For guidance on aging finer wines, ask your dealer or consult Wine Spectator's vintage chart at winespectator.com. Generally, most whites are ready to drink within a few years of being bottled, though there are wonderful exceptions. Premium red Bordeaux traditionally has the ability to greatly improve with age, whereas Beaujolais Nouveau is meant to be drunk immediately. Store your bottles in a cool, dry place. Don't be overly concerned with drinking a wine at its "perfect" moment. That may have less to do with what's in the bottle than with who's at the table.

I met a woman at a nudist colony and we hit it off. Unfortunately, she was with a date. A few weeks later I saw her at another nudist activity with the same guy. I learned that she had been dating the guy for a month and considered nudist activities a good place to meet men. I thought about giving her my number, but it seemed inappropriate because she was there with someone else. What's the protocol? I don't want to steal her from another guy, but it sounds like the relationship isn't serious.—J.P., Miami, Florida

Even if you gave her your number, where would she put it? Ask for her number instead. If she provides it, you'll know there's interest. If she offers to write it on your erection, you'll definitely know there's interest. As for your concerns about her date, you can't steal what nobody owns.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most provocative, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or send e-mail via playboyadvisor.com, which includes a database of past columns. The Advisor's latest collection of sex tricks, 365 Ways to Improve Your Sex Life, is available in bookstores or by phoning 800-423-9494.*

SPOUSAL RIGHTS

vermont lawmakers catalog the benefits of marriage

For the past decade, the forces of the religious right have resisted gay marriage, saying, among other things, that it demeans the traditional union. Earlier this year, the Vermont legislature passed a groundbreaking "civil union" statute that affords committed gay partners the same rights given to married couples. What are these sacred rights? While drafting the bill, the Judiciary Committee of the Vermont House asked its lawyers to comb the state code for every mention of marriage. Their inch-thick report listed 870 statutes that extend legal privileges to a spouse.

The statutes included the obvious: access to a spouse's health insurance, hospital visitation rights, financial support in the event of a divorce. A handful of laws acknowledged the sexual monopoly implicit in the idea of marriage. Either spouse may bring suit for loss of consortium. The state recognizes the one-to-a-customer clause. A person with a living spouse is prohibited from marrying another without divorcing that spouse. This does not apply, however, to persons who believe their partners have been dead for at least seven years—literally, not sexually.

Religious conservatives say marriage is God's blueprint, but a slew of statutes extend special powers to spouses in dealings with less-powerful deities—e.g., the local physician. For example, a doctor who withholds information from a patient about the risks of medical treatment because such news would adversely affect the patient's condition must tell the truth to the spouse. In the absence of a physician or dentist, one spouse may administer drugs to the other.

Many of the statutes extend privileges to the spouse upon the death of a partner. It is not the living relationship that interests the law but the property interests.

If one partner dies without leaving a will, the survivor is entitled to one third of the decedent's estate. The survivor is also entitled to all household goods, furnishings in a shared household or, should they be living out of a car, the automobile. The spouse retains rights to certain specialty license plates (POW, Pearl Harbor, Purple Heart and numbers 101 through 9999). A widow's clothing cannot be considered assets of the deceased's estate. A probate court cannot move a corpse from one cemetery to another if the surviving spouse objects.

A spouse may donate all or part of the deceased partner's body to science, unless the deceased specifically requested otherwise.

When a married person "by excessive drinking, gambling, intemperate habits or debauchery spends, wastes

or lessens his estate and exposes himself or his family to want or suffering," a spouse may ask the court to have a guardian appointed for the no-good bum.

A spouse has the right to seek an annulment if at the time of the marriage either party was under 16, suffered from idiocy or lunacy, or practiced fraud.

If one person enters a marriage knowing that he or she is infected with gonorrhea or syphilis, but does not tell his or her partner about it, the infected partner can be imprisoned for two years and fined $500.

The spouse of a mentally retarded adult may file a petition seeking to sterilize his or her partner.

Though their home may be seized, a married couple cannot be forced from their property during a natural disaster or enemy attack.

If a polygraph exam is required for a job, the examinee cannot be quizzed about his or her spouse.

How else does the law love thee? Let us count the ways:

In Vermont, a spouse does not have to test his or her horse, pony, mule, ass or zebra for equine infectious anemia if selling the animal to his or her partner.

A spouse cannot be charged if his or her partner harbors, conceals or comforts an escaped prisoner who the spouse knows has escaped from prison.

It is not a crime for a spouse to kill or wound another person in the "just and necessary" defense of his or her partner.

A spouse may request that bartenders and liquor stores refuse to sell wine, liquor or beer to the person's husband or wife. If an intoxicated person is tossed in the slammer, his or her spouse must be notified, unless the drunk requests otherwise.

A spouse can cut timber on his or her partner's land as long as a notice of intent to cut timber is filed 15 days before taking a chain saw to the trees.

Without acquiring a license, both members of a couple may fish from water on their property, shoot pickerel and take wild animals.

The spouse of a landowner may kill a deer that was damaging a tree or crop on the couple's property, unless that crop is grass. He or she must report the death and immediately dress the carcass as meat. This does not apply to rabbit or other furbearing animals.

A landowner or his or her spouse may kill a moose that has consistently caused damage to a Christmas tree plantation on their property.

Jerry Falwell and his crew are correct. Marriage is a sacred institution. With rights like these, who would remain single?

By PATTY LAMBERTI

CHEAP JUSTICE

if you are poor and accused of a capital crime, don't expect much

By JOHN D. THOMAS

Looking for a lawyer to defend Gregory Wilson in a 1988 death penalty trial, a Kentucky judge posted a sign in his courthouse that read PLEASE HELP. DESPERATE. William Hagedorn accepted the job for $2500. Hagedorn, who had never tried a capital case, gave a tavern as his office address. Hagedorn missed various parts of the trial and questioned only a few witnesses. Wilson was found guilty and sentenced to die.

During the 1992 murder trial of George McFarland, a reporter for the *Houston Chronicle* wrote that "defense attorney John Benn spent much of Thursday afternoon's trial in apparent deep sleep. His mouth kept falling open, his head lolled back on his shoulders, then he awakened just long enough to catch himself and sit upright. Then it happened again. And again. And again." Benn later described the trial as "boring." His client received a death sentence.

Because the fees paid to court-appointed attorneys are so low, generally only two kinds of lawyers are attracted to death penalty cases—inexperienced ones and bad ones. The inexperienced ones often lose because they don't know what they're doing, but it's the latter breed that are the deadly contradiction, because once they become part of the system they usually stay in it for good.

Texas lawyer Joe Frank Cannon was known to speed through trials like "greased lightning" when defending poor clients. While defending Calvin Burdine, Cannon slept as the prosecutor presented evidence. Cannon took a total of three pages of notes. His client went to death row.

Ronald Mock may have had more clients sentenced to death row than any lawyer in the country (19 by his count). Seven have been executed, including Gary Graham, who was killed by the state in June despite lingering questions about his guilt. Another five face the death penalty. Four have petitions pending in which they accuse Mock of ineffective counsel. After being reprimanded by the Texas Bar Association, Mock said, "I have a permanent parking spot at the grievance committee."

Lucky for him. An investigation by the *Chicago Tribune* found that of 131 inmates executed in Texas under Governor George Bush, 43 were represented by attorneys who at some point had been disbarred, suspended or otherwise sanctioned.

James Liebman, a Columbia University law professor who has studied more than 4500 death penalty cases, found that more than two thirds were marred by serious error, from prosecutorial misconduct to incompetent defense. Some death penalty opponents have focused on recurring flaws—people sentenced to death on the basis of testimony from jailhouse snitches (see *The Playboy Forum*, June 1999), forced confessions (*The Playboy Forum*, July 1999) or the false or mistaken testimony of eyewitnesses. Others have focused on the economics of justice. If we hold execution as the ultimate act of punishment, shouldn't we hold the system that enacts it to a higher standard?

Yet studies show that the justice system has a pitiful disregard for such cases, especially when it comes to money. Although the American Bar Association's guidelines hold that "the objective should be to provide a reasonable rate of hourly compensation" for lawyers handling death penalty litigation, the word reasonable means different things in different states.

In New York, there is no cap on attorneys' fees, and the hourly rate is $125 for lead counsel. In Louisiana, attorneys are paid $57.65 an hour, with a $78,000 cap for two attorneys working on each case. That figure includes a paltry $5000 that may be used for investigations. In Kentucky, defense lawyers are paid $50 an hour, with a $12,500 cap, plus reasonable expenses. In Mississippi the cap is $1000, plus overhead expenses set at $25 an hour.

Matters get even worse in the postconviction review process. One study determined that an attorney should spend at least 400 hours on a capital case after a conviction. Alabama pays a mere $600 to lawyers for doing that work, and Georgia pays zilch. The *Chicago Tribune* investigation found an alarming level of incompetence among court-appointed appeals lawyers in Texas—including those who had been sanctioned by the bar for offenses such as failure to show up in court, lying to the judge and dismissing a legal claim without the permission or knowledge of a client.

If you insist that the state be allowed to kill men and women convicted of serious crimes, you must be confident that you have sentenced the right person. In past months, journalists have unmasked the executioner. Since 1975, 87 residents of death row have had their sentences overturned, 13 of them in Illinois. When Illinois Governor George Ryan issued a moratorium on executions earlier this year, he threw down a challenge for governors in the 37 other death penalty states, including the governor who is running for president. The process must be fixed.

FORUM

THE CRIMINAL SCIENCE

why the delay on dna testing?

By DAVID BYRD

Wilton Dedge has been in a Florida prison for 18 years for the knife assault and rape of a teenage girl. Like many prisoners, Dedge insists he's innocent. But the circumstances of his claim merit a closer look. All Dedge wanted was for the state to turn over saliva and blood samples, as well as semen taken from the victim's vagina after the rape. Forensic scientists could then conduct tests to determine if the samples contain Dedge's DNA.

Until a judge intervened earlier this year, the prosecution had refused. While Florida law allows convicts to request a new trial if evidence arises after the initial conviction, it must be done within two years. This type of testing did not exist in the early Eighties, when Wilton Dedge's appeals began.

In Dedge's case, the prosecution insisted its hands were tied. "Without rules, we would never have any finality to the case," said Robert Holmes, the state's attorney who handled the case. "It's common sense."

Such prosecutorial arrogance is not limited to Florida. In 33 states, motions for new trials based on DNA testing or other new evidence must be filed within six months. Only a few states have laws that compel prosecutors to provide DNA evidence for postconviction testing.

To oppose DNA testing is a matter of saving face: It doesn't look good for the prosecution to have put the wrong man in prison—or to admit that the right man may still be at large. In Dedge's case, there's reason to believe he's telling the truth even without DNA evidence. The victim originally identified Dedge's brother as her attacker. She also told police her attacker was about six feet tall and weighed 160 to 180 pounds. Dedge is five feet six inches and weighed 125 pounds. During the trial, prosecutors presented no physical evidence tying him to the assault.

Dedge is so adamant about his innocence that he refused to take part in a sex-offender course that would have reduced his sentence—because the course required participants to admit their guilt.

Not every prosecutor fights DNA testing when there appears to be reasonable doubt about a prisoner's guilt. Those who do, such as Robert Holmes, subscribe to the adage that a person convicted of a serious crime gets only "one bite of the apple"—if you allow too many appeals, justice is never complete. Some also argue that the limited public resources available for DNA testing should be used to resolve unsolved crimes, not examine those already dispensed by a jury.

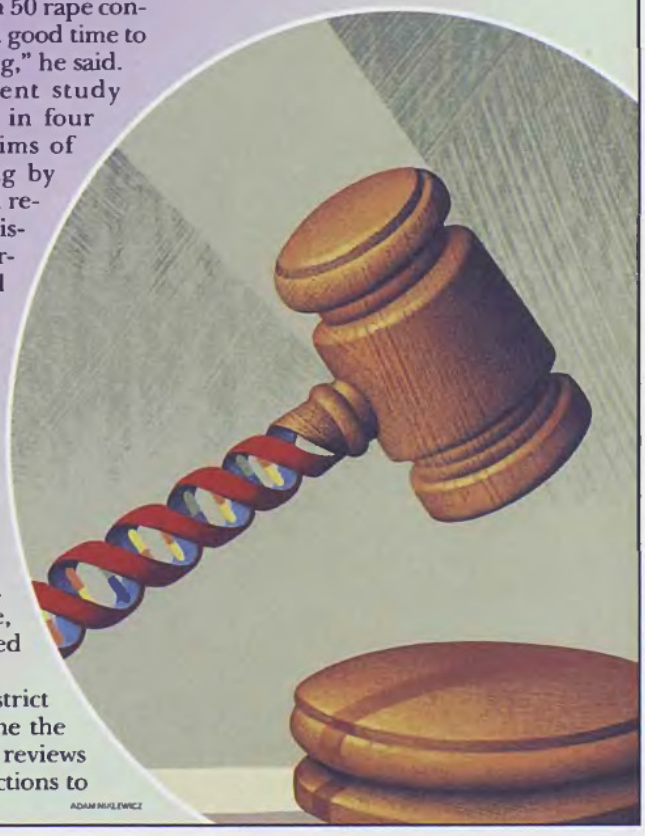
But how do you explain that to a wrongfully convicted man? In Louisiana, Clyde Charles' lawyers pleaded for nine years for access to evidence from a 1981 rape for which Charles received a life sentence. When they finally got it, he was exonerated. Convicted in 1983 of a Texas rape, A.B. Butler Jr. asked for seven years for DNA testing on the evidence. It proved his innocence, and Governor George W. Bush pardoned him. Another Texas inmate, Kevin Byrd, spent 12 years in prison before tests freed him. Byrd's lawyer claimed in *The New York Times* that following his client's release, Houston authorities destroyed evidence from 50 rape convictions. "I guess it was a good time to do a little spring cleaning," he said.

A Justice Department study found that about one in four identifications by victims of rape are proved wrong by DNA testing. Whether a result of prosecutorial misconduct or of human error, the rate of wrongful convictions is alarming. According to the Innocence Project, at least 74 prisoners in North America have been released since the late Eighties after DNA tests proved them innocent. Eight had been on death row. Science has shed light on a flawed system of justice, and science has provided the cure.

In San Diego, the district attorney's office has done the right thing: It ordered reviews of every one of its convictions to determine which merit DNA testing. Prosecutors were troubled by the case of a local man who spent 10 years in prison before testing freed him. They expect that his case is an anomaly, and that any further testing will confirm, rather than overturn, their convictions. That's fine. If it does, they'll be applauded for their prowess. If it doesn't, they'll be applauded for their fairness.

Despite fears that the system would be flooded with appeals, there are a limited number of prisoners who can request testing. They must have been convicted of a crime for which genetic evidence still exists. And generally they must have been convicted before DNA testing became a routine part of trials. Though some guilty prisoners push for testing, perhaps believing a quirk of fate will free them, most inmates who appeal expect to be exonerated. "We've had only three appeals in Florida," says Milton Hirsch, a lawyer representing Wilton Dedge. "You're not going to see a flood."

In the long run, DNA testing saves money. Depending on the amount of semen or blood, a test costs $2000 to $10,000. The average expense to house an inmate for a year is $22,000. If Louisiana had granted Clyde Charles' request for testing more than nine years ago, it could have prevented the waste of nearly $200,000—and freed an innocent man that much sooner.



ADAM NIKLEWICZ

READER

SWINGERS' RIGHTS

Before authorities in Florida or elsewhere contemplate another swing club raid like those described in "Teachers Pet" (*The Playboy Forum*, June), they should realize they are challenging a large, well-organized middle-class subculture that extends across the continent. While researching my book, *The Lifestyle: A Look at the Erotic Rites of Swingers*, I discovered that the swinger's lifestyle combines traditional North American values—matrimony, emotional monogamy and ethical living—with fantasies of attending bacchic parties. An estimated 3 million sunny suburbanites enjoy "the lifestyle." Every weekend across the country they attend hundreds of organized parties and thousands of informal gatherings. They have their own multimillion-dollar travel industry. Several times a year they stage conventions, the largest of which draws 2000 couples. According to a survey at a 1996 gathering in San Diego, a third of the attendees have postgraduate degrees, almost a third vote Republican and 40 percent are practicing members of major religions.

Because swing parties take place peaceably and privately, it's the authorities who must initiate complaints. In Florida, it was the Fort Lauderdale police. In California, the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control drove a long-running Lifestyles Organization convention out of the state by threatening to revoke the liquor licenses of the hotels that hosted it. In Canada, Montreal police infiltrated the premises of a club called L'Orage. After a six-month undercover operation, they raided the club and arrested about 40 people. The police played the surveillance sex videos they'd taken in the club in open court—a lesson to all who transgress.

The harm that's done to the couples caught in these moral dragnets has galvanized people to protest. At the 1999 Reno convention, 3000 middle-aged suburbanites stood with their fists in the air and chanted, "No more raids!" The Lifestyles Organization has filed suit against the bureaucrats who drove their convention from California. Law and order folks are standing up for their right to swing—and getting support from the numerous police officers within their ranks.

Terry Gould
North Vancouver, British Columbia

Swingers, dancers and other people who express themselves sexually are routinely discriminated against. In a survey we conducted last year of 1000 people who enjoy S&M, for example, 30 percent reported they had lost a job, promotion or child custody, or were arrested or persecuted in other ways, because of their sexual preferences. Thirty-six percent said they had been victims of violence or harassment. We believe freedom of sexual expression should be a basic human right. For information, visit ncsfreedom.org or write 5505 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 184, Washington, D.C. 20015.

Melinda Chateauvert
Director of Public Affairs
National Coalition for
Sexual Freedom
Washington, D.C.

Shame on the school board in Broward County for concerning itself with the private lives of its faculty. The police officers who raided the Fort Lauderdale clubs, along with the anal-retentive members of the board, cannot be sexually content. Sexual tension is a terrible thing—it can turn kind, healthy and energetic people into loathsome tyrants. These people need to get some, and right away.

Chaz Melonic
East Aurora, New York

Soon the police will be staking out all of our homes and counting how many people go in and out.

Brent Ross
Huntington Beach, California

PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY

In his article on protecting personal privacy ("Duck and Cover," *The Playboy Forum*, July), Chip Rowe fails to discuss the benefits that consumers receive from the collection and use of their information by marketers. Marketers collect information to identify potential customers and better target solicitations. For example, a consumer might see online banner ads for products or services based on the websites he or she has previously visited. Where is the harm in that? Such solicitations are good for consumers, who receive information about products they are likely to be interested in, and for marketers, who are able to reach people who may be interested in their products.

Do consumers have a right to know what information is collected, how it is used and if it is shared with other marketers? Absolutely. Should individuals be allowed to restrict access to their personal information? Yes. That is why the Direct Marketing Association

FOR THE RECORD

FRIEDANSTEIN

"About six years ago I was interviewed by a writer working on a biography of Betty Friedan. In the course of our talk she said, 'Everywhere I went I heard one description of Betty over and over—a monster!' Betty being monstrous in the pursuit of her goals doesn't bother me at all. She changed the course of history almost singlehandedly. It took a monster perhaps—a driven, superaggressive, egocentric, almost lunatic dynamo—to rock the world the way she did. Unfortunately, she was that same person at home, where this kind of conduct doesn't work."

—from a website established by Carl Friedan to refute charges in his ex-wife's memoir that he physically abused her.

RESPONSE

strongly supports the concepts of notice and choice and allowing consumers to opt out of data exchanges. Our members are required to follow these basic fair information practices.

The industry understands that if consumers are not comfortable with how their information is collected and used, they will shop elsewhere. And that is why companies are moving aggressively to address online privacy.

Stephen Altobelli
Director of Public Affairs
Direct Marketing Association
New York, New York

BARE BREASTS

Despite what Joshua Green indicated in "Busted! The Crackdown on Cleavage" (*The Playboy Forum*, July), clothing-optional beaches, parks, clubs and resorts are not all in remote areas. Most are very much a part of their communities. Some examples include: Apollo Beach on the Canaveral National Seashore in Volusia County, Florida, Haulover Beach in Miami, and Paradise Cove and Secret Creek Beach in Lake Tahoe and the Nevada Basin. As a family-oriented organization with more than 230 affiliated clubs and resorts, the American Association for Nude Recreation believes the rights of both nudists and nonnudists should be protected and respected. PLAYBOY readers interested in the topic may phone us at 800-879-6833 or visit aanr.com.

Gregory Smith, President
American Association for
Nude Recreation
Kissimmee, Florida

Ever since the Louisiana Purchase, there's been controversy about just how wild people in New Orleans should be allowed to get. The New Orleans police have issued an apology for their get-tough announcement, and Mardi Gras wasn't any less decent than last year. Arrests depended on the usual: which cop is in what mood when.

Charles Cannon
New Orleans, Louisiana

NUDE DANCING

Rebecca Reed is a pillar of her community with commendable strength of character ("Criminal Moves," *The Playboy Forum*, June). Her profession—and the pleasure industry in general—is considered politically incorrect. That makes it an easy target for criminalization. I have never visited a topless club, but those who want to should be allowed the liberty to do so.

Merrick Sinclair
Reno, Nevada

CANADIAN CENSORSHIP

Little Sister's and the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association applaud your report on our fight against the censorship powers of Canada Customs ("Blue Borders," *The Playboy Forum*, June). We want to clarify two points: First, Little Sister's and the BCCLA have worked together on this case since the beginning, and we are co-plaintiffs in the lawsuit against Customs. Second, although the lower courts agreed with us that Customs had improperly seized legal material, they refused to strip Customs of its power to censor. Instead, the courts indicated that the system somehow could be fixed. We are convinced it can't be fixed, and that is the issue before the Supreme Court of Canada.

This fight, which has cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, has been paid for in part by the generous donations of individuals and groups to whom free expression is an elemental right.

John Westwood
B.C. Civil Liberties Association

Janine Fuller
Little Sister's Book and Art
Emporium
Vancouver, British Columbia

We would like to hear your point of view. Send questions, opinions and quirky stuff to The Playboy Forum Reader Response, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, e-mail forum@playboy.com or fax 312-951-2939. Please include a daytime phone number and your city and state or province.*

FORUM F.Y.I.

Randy Cassingham edits a free weekly e-mail newsletter, This Is True, that contains his take on offbeat news items. In one issue he reported on a tomato grower who refused to use fêng shui to improve his yields. The grower said he could not rely on "a power other than God," to which Cassingham responded, "You mean, like the sun?" Several irate Christians wrote to condemn the humorist to hell for allegedly mocking the grower's faith. If it was that easy to send someone to hell, Cassingham reasoned, it should be just as easy to escape the pits. He has since distributed thousands of "Get Out of Hell Free" cards to subscribers and friends. Send $1 for each set of 10 ($2 from overseas) to P.O. Box 17326, Boulder, Colorado 80308. Cash is preferred on orders of less than $5; checks should be made payable to Freecom.

FEELING YOUR PAIN

the national abuse of the americans with disabilities act

By JAMES BOVARD

A decade ago, Congress passed the Americans With Disabilities Act. The law has helped thousands of disabled people live better lives, especially in the areas of housing and employment. Some studies showed that before the ADA, more than 70 percent of the disabled were unemployed.

At the same time, the ADA has produced its share of tragicomedy. Before the U.S. Supreme Court narrowed the law this past November, workers who had been dismissed or turned down for jobs and who had poor vision or high blood pressure had used the act to sue for compensation. The largest percentage of the 3965 ADA complaints made to the government in fiscal 1999 involved back and other orthopedic impairments. Claims for emotional or psychiatric problems such as anxiety disorder and depression are close behind and growing.

> Feeling down? Take two Prozacs and call a lawyer in the morning.

In 1997 the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission distributed "enforcement guidance" on how the ADA should be applied to citizens with mental disabilities. "Mental impairments," the EEOC declared, "restrict major life activities such as learning, thinking, concentrating, interacting with others, caring for oneself, speaking, performing manual tasks or working." The agency continued: "An impairment substantially limits an individual's ability to concentrate. An individual would be substantially limited if he or she were easily and frequently distracted, meaning that his/her attention was frequently drawn to irrelevant sights or sounds or to intrusive thoughts."

For many cubicle dwellers in corporate America this is practically a description of daily life. Feeling down? Take two Prozacs and call a lawyer in the morning.

Aryeh Motzkin, a 60-year-old philosophy professor, lost his job at Boston University following allegations that he sexually assaulted a female professor and sexually harassed at least three students. Motzkin denied the charges but admitted that the tranquilizers and antidepressants he was taking "loosened his inhibitions." He sued BU for violating the ADA. Motzkin claimed that once students complained about his behavior the university knew of his handicap and was obligated to help him deal with it.

A government clerk in Howard County, Maryland was fired after repeated rude outbursts and loud denunciations of her supervisors. She sued, claiming the firing violated her civil rights because she was a manic-depressive and that the employer was obliged to strip her job of its inherent stress.

A Massachusetts truck driver sued under the ADA, demanding he be permitted to drive special routes to accommodate his fear of crossing bridges. The company claimed he had been fired after he was caught falsifying federally required travel logs.

A Madison, Wisconsin file clerk sued because, she said, her employer refused to provide reasonable accommodation for her narcolepsy. The woman was routinely late for work and had sought permission to continue arriving late.

> The ADA brings out the government's intemperate side.

In 1998 a federal appeals court ruled that Marilyn Bartlett, an applicant for the New York bar exam, was entitled to reasonable accommodations because she could read only "slowly, haltingly and laboriously." *The New York Times* reported that Bartlett "had asked for extended time on the exam, permission to tape-record her essays and the opportunity to circle multiple-choice answers in the test booklet rather than use the computerized answer sheet." For her fifth try, the state bar paid for an assistant to read Bartlett the questions in a separate room. After Bartlett again flunked, she blamed the assistant for distracting her by eating snack food.

ADA access police are trolling for violators across the land:

The city of Bellevue, Washington threatened to fine a strip club $4500 because it did not have a wheelchair lift attached to the stage. An exasperated representative of the company that hires the strippers said of the government policy: "If you can't dance, why should you even be onstage?"

The ADA brings out the Justice Department's intemperate side. After Justice intervened, a bar in Illinois changed its policy of refusing to sell drinks to customers who appear to be drunk based on the way they walk. The reason: A customer with Parkinson's disease had been refused service.

A publisher terminated Robert Johnson because he allegedly mumbled on the telephone during a telemarketing training course. Johnson denied that he mumbled and sued the publisher, claiming that the company was biased against him because he was missing 18 teeth. A federal appeals court upheld his suit, noting that "unlike Johnson, the Americans With Disabilities Act has teeth."

The federal Department of Transportation in 1998 proposed peanut-free zones on airplanes to protect those who are allergic to peanuts. Some schools have banned peanut butter from their cafeterias because of fears that peanut allergies might qualify as a disability under the ADA. Other school systems have responded to the threat of disability suits by prohibiting children from bringing peanut butter sandwiches or other peanut products to school.

THE RIGHT TO CRASH

Public safety precautions have become potential federal crimes. The ADA stated that disabled citizens must be accommodated unless doing so would result in a "direct threat" to the health and well-being of other people. But for the EEOC and the Justice Department, nothing is more threatening than unequal treatment.

In 1997 the EEOC won a $5.5 million verdict against Ryder Systems. The company had removed a truck driver after he suffered an epileptic seizure on the job. The driver took a

job with another firm, had a seizure while driving, and crashed into a tree.

The EEOC sued Bell Helicopter Textron because the company fired an epileptic after he had a seizure while working as a rotary shaper operator.

The EEOC sued Amego, Inc. after it fired a woman suffering from depression and bulimia who attempted suicide with prescription medicine. She had been in charge of ordering and administering medication at the company's day treatment program for autistic and behaviorally disordered people.

The ADA protects people with alcohol and illicit drug problems as long as they can prove they are recovering or are seeking treatment—or they make some plausible excuse for their behavior. Thanks to the ADA, Northwest Airlines rehired an airplane pilot who had been fired after he was caught flying a passenger jet while legally drunk. The pilot entered a rehab program, then got his job back.

Concerns about safety have created a double bind for corporate America. After the *Exxon Valdez* hit a reef and dumped 11 million gallons of oil along the Alaskan coast in 1989, the Justice Department sued Exxon for allowing a former alcoholic to captain the ship. The oil company adopted a strict policy that banned "all employees who currently have a substance abuse problem and all employees who have a history of substance abuse" from working in any position in which "there is a high exposure to catastrophic public, environmental or employee incidents and there is either no direct supervision or very limited supervision." Roughly 10 percent of Exxon's positions were placed in this category.

The EEOC was outraged. Chairman Gilbert Casellas complained that the policy was "based on irrational fears or stereotypes about individuals with a record of past substance abuse." The EEOC sued, demanding that Exxon do an "individualized assessment" for each rehabilitated addict seeking a high-risk job and reassign them only if they posed a "direct threat" to the health or safety of co-workers. The EEOC did not specify that each former addict or alcoholic should be allowed to crash a tanker before being presumed unfit for such tasks.

The ADA has had a major effect on policies aimed to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Because people with such diseases are perceived to be disabled, they fall under the protection of the act, and the onus falls on anyone seeking to minimize the spread of the disease.

In a 1993 speech marking World AIDS Day, Attorney General Janet Reno declared, "No American, including those with AIDS, should be made to suffer discrimination in the workplace or in the doctor's office." The Justice Department warned that dentists who take extra precautions while treating HIV patients would be breaking the law. Minimizing public prejudice against people with infectious diseases is now more important than minimizing the spread of the disease.

DAVID VOIGT

The Supreme Court in 1998 heard the case of a Maine dentist, Randon Bragdon, who was accused of violating the ADA because he refused to fill the cavity of an HIV-positive patient in his office. Instead, he offered to treat her at a hospital.

The patient sued, claiming Bragdon had violated her civil rights by not treating her in the same way as other patients. The Justice Department, in its brief, insisted that Bragdon had no right to refuse to treat the patient in his office, because the risks to him and his staff were not significant enough to override the ADA's imperatives. Yet the federal Centers for Disease Control had reported in 1994 that 37 health care practitioners had been infected while treating HIV-positive patients, including seven suspected occupational transmissions to dental workers.

It's estimated that dentists suffer 1.5 accidental needle sticks per 100 injections. The Food and Drug Administration in 1992 ordered blood banks not to accept donations from anyone who had been directly exposed to the blood of anyone with HIV in the previous year. As Bragdon's brief asked, "If the blood bank may deem the risk significant, why not the dentist?" Refusing to allow the dentist to take precautions when treating an HIV-positive patient also places the dentist's other patients at greater risk.

The patient was victorious. The Court effectively ruled that politically correct dentistry is more important than dead dentists.

The current policies are driven by concern about prejudice against people with HIV, yet the same policies make it far more difficult to restrict public exposures to medical professionals with hepatitis. While the risk of transmitting HIV in a medical setting is low, the risk of transmitting hepatitis is high. One UCLA surgeon spread hepatitis to 18 heart patients in the early Nineties. Even though the hospital knew the surgeon was infected, he was permitted to continue operating with no warning to his patients. That decision was, after all, in compliance with federal guidelines.

The ADA has been nicknamed Attorneys' Dreams Answered. The National Federation of Independent Business has estimated that companies spend an average of $12,000 in legal fees to defend themselves against each ADA suit. The cost can rise to $100,000 if the case goes to a jury. Because the costs of defending against suits are high and the potential penalties are staggering, companies often settle. Miami lawyer Michael Casey notes that many ADA claims are "a legal form of extortion, and the ADA is all-purpose extortion."

Bovard is the author of Feeling Your Pain: The Explosion and Abuse of Government Power During the Clinton–Gore Years (St. Martin's Press).

NEWSFRONT

what's happening in the sexual and social arenas

THOSE CRAZY KIDS

POWERS, OREGON—*High school senior Leslie Shorb said she had spring fever when she removed her clothes after gym class and showered in the boys' locker room*

with five male classmates. School officials suspended the valedictorian for 10 days, stripped her of the academic honor and banned her and the boys from extracurricular activities. Shorb asked a county judge to allow her to speak at graduation, but he ruled against her. At the hearing, the superintendent claimed that Shorb had violated the boys' privacy, but three boys testified they hadn't felt violated in the least.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO—*Nine high school boys who were on a field trip to a science museum wanted something besides fast food for lunch, so they ordered hamburgers at Hooters. When their principal at St. Lawrence High School in Cornwall heard about the meal, she suspended the group for two days. Dining at the restaurant, she said, had been "injurious to the moral tone of the school."*

TRUTH OR DARE

LOS ANGELES—*In 1998 Rolling Stone accused DARE, a federally funded antidrug program taught in schools by uniformed police officers, of attempting to "silence critics, suppress scientific research and punish nonbelievers." DARE sued the magazine for libel, asking for $50 million in damages. After receiving depositions, a federal judge threw out the case, ruling that the charges were "substantially true."*

MARIJUANA FOLLIES

JACKSON, KENTUCKY—*When police in helicopters spotted some 500 marijuana plants near Charles Thomas Jr.'s trailer home, they questioned the college student at length. He denied knowing anything about the crop, which was growing on a neighbor's land. The police didn't charge him, but to satisfy a 1994 state law, a trooper sent notice to tax officials identifying Thomas as the "dealer" responsible for the plants. The state then ordered Thomas to pay $1,161,859.94 in taxes, penalties and interest on the plants. To challenge the assessment, he must post a bond in the amount of the bill.*

TORONTO—*The Ontario Film Review Board banned a documentary called Grass because it included a 20-second clip of monkeys and chimpanzees being forced to ingest marijuana. The board said the archival footage, created in 1970 during U.S. government experiments, depicted animal abuse because the simians had been restrained. The censors had no objections to scenes that showed humans smoking pot, stoned mice toppling off of tables or fish swimming sideways.*

TUCSON, ARIZONA—*In December 1997 a Pima County detective watched two men back an El Camino into a garage. He couldn't see the back of the car but said he heard "a flat-sounding kind of thump" that he recognized as a bale of reefer being loaded into the trunk. Officers arrested the men and found marijuana. In May, a federal appeals court reversed the conviction of the driver, ruling that "marijuana does not have a distinctive sound" and that the detective did not have enough reason to suspect the men.*

END RUNS

MINNEAPOLIS—*Civil liberties groups filed a class-action suit to overturn a state law that bans both oral and anal sex. The plaintiffs include a straight couple, a lesbian who could be evicted because her lease prohibits illegal activity and a divorced gay man who fears losing the right to visit his children. Though rarely enforced, the law calls for violators to spend as long as a year in jail and pay up to $3000 in fines.*

HOUSTON—*A Texas appeals court overturned the state's sodomy law, which had been revised in 1974 to apply only to gay men. The case began in 1998, when Houston police entered an unlocked apartment following a false report of an armed intruder. Inside, they arrested two men engaged in "deviant homosexual conduct."*

NEW ORLEANS—*The state Supreme Court voted 5–2 to uphold Louisiana's 195-year-old sodomy law. The court ruled on the case of a man acquitted of rape but convicted of sodomy because the couple had oral sex. The court also upheld, by a 6–1 vote, a portion of the law that provides for harsher punishment for prostitutes who engage only in oral sex. Three states (Arkansas, Kansas and Oklahoma) have laws against gay sex, and 12 (Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Utah and Virginia) ban anal and oral sex between any couple.*

MORBID OFFER

FORT WORTH, TEXAS—*Michael Toney needed cash to establish a trust fund for his estranged daughters, so he decided to auction off one of the few things of value he felt he owned—spots to witness his execution. Toney faces death by lethal injection for planting a briefcase bomb that killed three people. A friend attempted to*

auction five seats to watch Toney's death (minimum bid: $100), but eBay pulled the listing before anyone made an offer. State officials say that even if the auction had been completed, the condemned can reserve seats only for close family and friends.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KEVIN POPE

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: BOB COSTAS

a candid conversation with the thinking man's sportscaster on the olympics, baseball, the nba and the truth about howard cosell and david letterman

Bob Costas is at Yankee Stadium for game three of the World Series. The noise is deafening in the NBC booth, where he is calling the play-by-play. Headphones blot out some of the pandemonium and at the same time transmit another source of extraneous audio: the voice of producer David Neal. After half an inning, Costas calls for the Advil.

It's a trademark Costas performance—smooth, knowledgeable, ironic, humorous. From time to time he swivels around and rests a hand on the shoulder of analyst Joe Morgan ("To let him know I'm listening," Costas says). Like two vaudevillians, they have their tempo, timing and temperaments in sync. Yet only when seated directly behind Costas can one fully appreciate the beautifully choreographed presentation he's been pulling off for 26 years.

Robert Quinlan Costas was born on March 22, 1952, and grew up in New York in Queens and on Long Island. His father, John, an electrical engineer, was a sports fan and gambler who coaxed his son to monitor the radio for scores. Seduced by the winsome voices of Mel Allen, Red Barber, Ernie Harwell and Vin Scully, Bob often fell asleep with a transistor radio tucked under his pillow. By day he "announced" the play-by-play of his own ball games, or even when tossing tennis balls against a wall by himself.

At Syracuse University he began broadcasting at the campus FM radio station and trying to lose his New York accent. He then landed a job as a weekend sports anchor, substitute weatherman and fill-in host for Bowling for Dollars with a local TV station. Six months later, he doctored a highlight tape by turning up the bass to make himself sound older and was immediately hired by KMOX-AM to broadcast games of the Spirits of St. Louis in the old American Basketball Association.

Armed with an easy-listening voice and an impressive memory, Costas came to the attention of CBS. He was recruited to work NFL and college basketball games. By 1980, he had signed a contract with NBC, again to work football and basketball, all the while yearning to cover his favorite sport—baseball. Finally, in 1983, NBC teamed him with Tony Kubek on the backup national game of the week, and from that point on Costas was everywhere. He hosted the network's NFL pregame, halftime and postgame shows. He also did a two-hour syndicated Sunday night radio program, Costas Coast to Coast, and soon was popping up on David Letterman calling elevator races. If that wasn't enough, he hosted Later, a half-hour interview show that followed Letterman on NBC.

In time, Costas grew weary of the workload and travel. He also worried that too much Costas might not serve him well. He dropped Later, Coast to Coast and the NFL telecasts to spend more time with his children, Keith, 14, and Taylor, 11, and his wife, Randy, at their home in St. Louis.

Now in the fourth year of a six-year NBC contract that pays him a reported $3 million a year, Costas will once again host the Olympic Summer Games and broadcast baseball's playoffs and World Series. Starting in February he will have a weekly half-hour show on HBO, "a sort of sports Nightline," he says, in which he can tackle issues, do commentaries and interview sports figures. That means he'll be giving up his NBA play-by-play post and will contribute only peripherally during playoff coverage.

At the age of 48 and having won 12 Emmys, has the time come for Costas to abandon sports for other TV pursuits? To find the answer to that question, as well as why he's been so critical of baseball lately, we sent writer **Diane K. Shah** *to catch up with Costas in New York and Los Angeles. She reports:*

"OK, so he's short. Five foot seven. Made to seem even shorter by the giant-size athletes he covers. 'Hey, it's not like I shop in the

"With some notable exceptions, sports talk radio is heat over light. It's all about attitude taking the place of informed opinion. It's so moronic. Hey, sports isn't brain surgery, but neither should it be brain-dead."

"I think most reasonable people would say the gymnastics coverage during the last Olympics was at times beyond parody. John Tesh is a nice man. He is a talented guy. But, oh man, those gymnastics."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUZY GORMAN

"I find it to be a subkindergarten view of religion to declare that Jesus, Allah or the man in the moon determined the outcome of a contest. Who believes that God micromanages a football or basketball game?"

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boys' department,' he says agreeably. 'Besides, Jim McKay isn't any taller and Bryant Gumbel barely is.'

"What you quickly learn about Costas is that he's never quite turned off. The man can talk. As with his on-air performances, each sentence flows seamlessly and grammatically into the next, sprinkled with Costasian irony and wit.

"Our interviews took place over the course of nine months, mainly in hotel lobbies and dining rooms. But it was while sitting with him in the booth at Yankee Stadium that I came to understand how his commentary runs smoothly over a torrent of information he is monitoring. One eye on a TV set to catch a sudden graphic, one ear peeled to producer Neal, Costas is also the recipient of scribbled notes from statistician Elliot Kalb. Barely giving them a glance, Costas tosses the notes onto the floor then phrases the item in his own words—never, of course, missing a beat.

"But baseball is only part of his life, so we started with the Olympic Summer Games in Sydney."

PLAYBOY: During the 16 days of the Olympics, you'll be on air six to eight hours a day. How much control do you have in deciding what's covered?

COSTAS: I have input, but no control. I host the Olympics, but I don't program them. And while I can control the words that come out of my mouth, I don't decide when we should cover a distance runner from Algeria instead of going back to swimming to take another look at an American in the 100-meter butterfly.

PLAYBOY: John Tesh was taken aback when you criticized him after he hosted the gymnastics during the 1996 Olympics. What was that all about?

COSTAS: I was very uncomfortable with some of the over-the-top aspects of the Olympic coverage. There's legitimate drama in sports and then there's hype, contrivance and maudlin nonsense. And I think most reasonable people would say that at times the gymnastics coverage was beyond parody. I didn't say anything on the air. But occasionally coming off some stuff, I might have paused for a second, raised an eyebrow, hoping to communicate to the reasonably perceptive, "Hey, folks, I just work here."

PLAYBOY: It seems it was more than that.

COSTAS: I'm really circumspect about not saying anything about my colleagues. But the whole tone of that coverage became the prevailing tone of the first week of the Olympics, and it made it difficult for me as the host. It's such a tightrope to walk because you represent the network, and it put me in a position of trying to figure out how to counterpunch without directly dissing it. So I often sat there on the set off the air rolling my eyes, actually amusing the technicians, who were cracking up.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you make a remark in public?

COSTAS: After the Olympics there was a roast for Marv Albert. This was before his troubles. I was one of the roasters. And Rudy Martzke of *USA Today* said to me, "So, what have you got planned for the Marv roast?" And I said, "Actually, I feel so emotional about Marv that I'm having John Tesh prepare my remarks." That's all I said. In fact, John is a very nice man. And I applaud him for his TV and musical endeavors. He's a talented guy. But, oh man, those gymnastics.

PLAYBOY: What are your favorite events?

COSTAS: To me, the essence of the Summer Olympics is track and field. Jesse Owens, Rafer Johnson, Smith and Carlos, Bob Beamon, Carl Lewis, Dan O'Brien, Bruce Jenner, Michael Johnson coming off the turn of the 200, Wilma Rudolph—those are the images that stick in my mind.

PLAYBOY: Apart from Marion Jones' attempt to win five gold medals, what stories will you be looking at?

COSTAS: There's Cathy Freeman, an Australian track star who is an aborigine, and the story of the treatment of aborigines in Australia is one of the stories within the Olympics. Also—and this is a relative rarity—the home country that isn't the old Soviet Union or the U.S. has a chance to win a lot of medals, specifically in swimming. So you'll have a situation where the Americans and the Australians are going at it like Duke and North Carolina. Also, there will be more of a focus on women's sports—soccer, of course. The next-best team in the world after the U.S. in softball is Australia. And to me, women's Olympic basketball is now more interesting than men's.

PLAYBOY: You've been called an easy-listening version of Howard Cosell. But wasn't Howard in a class by himself? His coverage and defense of Muhammad Ali are sports journalism legends.

COSTAS: If the rest of his career were dreck, the Ali thing alone earns him a place of high regard. It was a defining moment, and even with all the bombast and the self-congratulation, he was on the right side of it. He also deserves tremendous credit for helping to make *Monday Night Football* entertaining.

PLAYBOY: Don't you think it was Howard's "tell it like it is" bluntness that truly set him apart?

COSTAS: What's grown up is this myth that there was Cosell and the rest were all a bunch of bland robotic shills. Maybe the majority were bland, but there were many colorful and vivid announcers who may not have done the same things Cosell did, but they were excellent in their own way—Harry Caray, Vin Scully, Red Barber, Mel Allen, Lindsey Nelson, Jim McKay and literate essayists like Heywood Hale Broun and Jack Whitaker. Cosell brought an element of controversy and journalism that wasn't there before and has generally been lacking since. But there are many aspects to

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sports broadcasting. Who would you want at the mike when Koufax was working the final inning of his perfect game? Scully or Cosell? Who do you want at the mike when the Miracle on Ice happened? Or the earthquake hit? Al Michaels was at the mike for both, and Cosell couldn't approach what he did in those spots. I think some sportswriters knowingly use the myth of Cosell as a club to dismiss all modern sports broadcasters. When in fact many broadcasters, past and present, have done work that compares more than favorably with Cosell's.

PLAYBOY: Cosell himself was roundly attacked at the time.

COSTAS: Sure, but for being obnoxious. You've got this distilled notion that he was the only guy who ever really took on the issues. But the issues were more clear-cut then, and Roone Arledge recognized that Cosell talking to Ali and Frazier or grilling Pete Rozelle was not only journalism, it was riveting TV. My criticism of network sports today is that you will almost never see a discussion of franchise extortion, or the fact that a significant number of NFL players have been charged with serious crimes. To me it's a responsibility to do that, and it would be a lot more interesting than the 43rd feature on some player who has dedicated his season to his sick sister. That's the end of my rant.

PLAYBOY: But why aren't the issues being tackled today? Surely, not all network executives are fools.

COSTAS: I think NBC and our colleagues at other networks turn out lots of work that's high quality. But, generally speaking, there's a huge void in TV sports. Part of it is a reluctance to rough up the leagues they are in business with, but part of it has to do with the nature of the issues. There was a right side and a wrong side with Muhammad Ali, Curt Flood, Billie Jean King. I mean, I can give you a fairly detailed and insightful analysis of baseball's economic situation, but it's difficult to hop on a high horse in favor of either side, you know? The issues are not as vivid as they once were.

PLAYBOY: OK, so today's issues are different. But we don't hear anybody saying, "We shouldn't permit highly visible, well-paid athletes to get into bar brawls or drunk-driving accidents or violent episodes and not be prosecuted." Or how come nobody does a Cosellian tirade about the number of illegitimate children athletes father?

COSTAS: One of the reasons Cosell made an impression is that he dealt in tirades, which naturally some people remember more than the actual content of a more thoughtful and restrained presentation. Still, you make an interesting point. A lot of us who grew up in the Sixties and Seventies have been slow to react because we don't want to sound like reactionaries, like your Aunt Matilda in Omaha going, "Tsk, tsk." We somehow think it makes us appear uptight if we say, "Wait a minute. There are certain things that are just common decency."

PLAYBOY: But so much of what passes for controversy today is bad behavior, no?

COSTAS: Or just acting like an idiot. I mean, do you know how much more of a rebel Jim Bouton was than Dennis Rodman has ever dreamed of being? How much more guts Billie Jean King had, or Curt Flood or Muhammad Ali—or Arthur Ashe in his own quiet way, but with dignity? Or Sandy Koufax, when he wouldn't pitch the first game of the World Series because it fell on a High Holiday? How much more truly individual these people were than the cartoon characters who call themselves outrageous and say they're standing up for what they believe in, when mostly what they're standing up for is their own selfish needs? When was the last time you heard an athlete express outrage over something that didn't have to do with his paycheck?

PLAYBOY: Do you think leagues and teams should take a tougher stance against churlish or even illegal acts committed by their players?

COSTAS: You have to be careful because there's a presumption of innocence, and a charge is not the same as a conviction. So you have to let the legal system run its course. But I think leagues would be well within their rights, and players' associations would do well, to stop being so obstructionist about some of these things, to recognize there are certain behaviors that, if only for reasons of public relations, should not be tolerated.

PLAYBOY: Still, the bottom line would appear to be: If this player can help us, we will look the other way.

COSTAS: I believe the primary consideration still is: Can this guy help us win?

PLAYBOY: As an announcer, do you ever lose your timing or go into a slump?

COSTAS: In 1998. It was my first year on basketball, filling in for Marv Albert, and then during the 1998 baseball playoffs. Those were the first times I can remember feeling like I was pressing a little bit.

PLAYBOY: How come?

COSTAS: It was a combination of factors. I had a run from the late Eighties through the Nineties where all my assignments were well suited to me. I think I was well suited to host the Olympics, the football and basketball coverage. I was well suited to do *Later*. I had a radio show on Sunday nights so I could deal with issues and conduct in-depth interviews. And I would pop up now and then on *Charlie Rose* or *Nightline*, and it seemed like all the bases were covered in a way that fit. Then, because of the ages of my kids and commuting and other things, I gave up *Later* and the radio show.

PLAYBOY: You also gave up football. Why?

COSTAS: Hosting the NFL show, apart from the Olympics, is the biggest exposure you can have in sportscasting.

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You're on TV every week, you're the pregame, halftime, postgame. But then my connection to it waned. When I knew there were millions of fans who cared more about football than I did, I quit.

PLAYBOY: And you were doing less baseball, too, right?

COSTAS: Because NBC had no regular season package, I was not around all the teams as much as I was in the Eighties. Plus, I felt a certain alienation from baseball. As much as I loved it, I felt like, Geez, this is wrong—the whole direction of the game is wrong.

PLAYBOY: We'll get back to that soon. You're saying you got rusty?

COSTAS: Yes, and also it was just that all of a sudden, the places where I could do interviews or commentaries or essays were gone. I didn't have a forum. Network sports is loaded with hyping, shilling and the most superficial observations, and I'm thinking I have to put in something more worthwhile than that. So I tried to get in observations during the play-by-play, but I found that no matter how well expressed, it plays differently while a guy's going to the rosin bag. When you try to do the Vin Scully thing and the Howard Cosell thing simultaneously, it gets tricky. That was my mistake. I still work in commentary, but I'm more judicious about it now.

PLAYBOY: You couldn't figure out how to get back the fluidity?

COSTAS: Right. You don't want to be pushing too hard for it. So the anxiety for me is, Can I reach my own standard? People who care about me say I'm too self-critical, that it's one thing to try to do the best job you can; it's another to beat yourself up over it. And, man, I beat myself up over it. I went back and watched those tapes over and over again and tried to figure out what it was. It was scary and it was embarrassing.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel you've regained your groove?

COSTAS: Last summer I arranged to do two games on ESPN with Joe Morgan. That was helpful. I didn't get it to 100 percent, but it got close. Then a few games into the playoffs, the pacing and rhythm were there. Joe and I started playing off each other, and it sounds more like what I recall of the old conversational style in the Eighties with Tony Kubek.

PLAYBOY: In an earlier session, we asked you to respond to a criticism made of you during the World Series. You reacted angrily, and off the record. Why the thin skin?

COSTAS: I don't think I have one. What you hope for is some sense of proportion and you had asked me about an atypical, isolated comment. If yanked out of context, one stray comment becomes like, "When did you stop beating your wife?"

PLAYBOY: No, we were very specific. And we'll ask it again. During the World Series, David Letterman ripped you for not shutting up. He referred to you as "motormouth." We bring this up for two reasons. One, because you have a long-time personal relationship with him, and two, because he reaches a fairly large audience. When we first asked you about it, you referred to it as a kind of goof. So what surprised us was that you didn't flip it off with a funny retort.

COSTAS: I should have.

PLAYBOY: That got to you. And, rightly or wrongly, it revealed more about you than we expected to find.

COSTAS: What do you think it said?

PLAYBOY: That you are very sensitive.

COSTAS: I think you misunderstood. The only reason this stung was because it was David who said it. He's a brilliant guy. I've always admired him, and I'm grateful to him because he was very helpful to me by putting me on his show often early in my career. He had always said complimentary things about my work. He boosted me to NBC executives, which is part of the reason I wound up doing *Later*. When he went to CBS, he offered me the program after his, and a huge portion of the reason I almost did it was my personal regard for him. I'm very attuned to the kind of stuff Dave does. I'm a big fan of the kind of irreverent joking that takes place all the time on his show and from which nobody, including your

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buddies, is exempt. But this had a different tone. It came across as a gratuitous shot out of nowhere. It stunned me. So my response to your question was not, "How dare anybody say something about me," it was, "Wait a minute, why is David saying this?" No matter [*smile*], the steel-cage death match is a week from Tuesday.

PLAYBOY: We're assuming you didn't actually see this?

COSTAS: No, I did. I was in the hotel in New York. It was the Monday night between the second and third games of the World Series and I had just gotten in from Atlanta. The irony is that his producer had called earlier that day to get me on the show. I didn't get in until three P.M. and they tape around 4:30. Had the call come any earlier, I would have gone.

PLAYBOY: That might have saved you some grief.

COSTAS: I want to make this clear: I don't think that I am above criticism. Announcers, all of us, occasionally overplay our hands. Have I? On occasion do I take my strengths, which are command of the material and a good sense of history, and go to that a little too often when it would have been better if it were 10 or 15 percent less? Yeah. On occasion.

PLAYBOY: Does it bother you that most televised sporting events are presented as just more prime-time entertainment?

COSTAS: Sports was always a form of entertainment. No one went to see Joe DiMaggio just to study his batting form. They went to be entertained. But there wasn't such complete synergy between sports and business as there is now. You begin to feel you're always being sold something. In many cases, even if you haven't accomplished anything, you're a celebrity by virtue of being in the NBA for a couple of years. Style matters. Glamour matters.

PLAYBOY: Coaches, too?

COSTAS: You can't win without substance and real dedication. A guy like Pat Riley is a tremendous coach. But if someone else came in with his exact ideas, practice procedures and game strategies but didn't have the six championship rings, four of them as a head coach, and didn't have the image, he wouldn't have credibility. In a different way, Larry Bird has credibility because he's Larry Bird, and the roster of the Pacers is loaded with veteran guys who played at the same time Bird did. On the other hand, there's the famous quote from Shaquille O'Neal before an all-star game early in his career. Lenny Wilkens was one of the head coaches and Shaq asked, "Did he ever play in the NBA?" Lenny Wilkens is in the Hall of Fame. It's a short-attention-span world to begin with and it's a style-over-substance world. The most successful people are those who actually have substance but can carry it off with style. Like Riley.

PLAYBOY: Is that how you explain Phil Jackson's success with the Lakers?

COSTAS: Phil's obviously a very bright guy. But again, it's the credibility. Not just his six rings, but the Bulls kept playing when everybody else was done. The Lakers sat at home and watched him on television, and his standing was reinforced every time they cut away to him on the sideline and every time champagne was dumped on his head. From moment one with the Lakers, he'd already cleared an enormous hurdle.

PLAYBOY: Do you think television encourages outrageous behavior?

COSTAS: Definitely. If television hadn't focused on the mutual antagonism between John Rocker and the New York fans, a lot of this stuff wouldn't have gone as far as it has. I mean, the biggest reason Rocker wound up where he did was this culture of outrage we live in, this Jerry Springer–Dennis Rodman–WWF culture, where the loudest, dopiest person gets the attention. I think Rocker was trying to keep his customers satisfied and embellish his standing in his own mind as an outrageous character, maybe because it gratified his sense of self or because there could be a commercial benefit to it. And because he might not be too bright, this is the way he saw to do it.

PLAYBOY: In the minds of American viewers, you are most identified with baseball. Do you remember the first game you went to?

COSTAS: I was five years old and I remember going to the Polo Grounds and Ebbets Field and seeing the Giants and Dodgers games with my father. I remember being struck by the emerald green of the field, how purely white the baselines, batter's box and bases were at the start of the game. And holding my father's hand. The whole thing was outsize because I was a little kid. And it was a time when the mythology of the game was undisturbed. It drew me in, not just for the game but for the whole world of baseball. Radio broadcasts. Red Barber's voice, Mel Allen's voice. We lived in LA at the tail end of 1960 and for part of 1961, and I remember going to sleep with a transistor radio under the pillow, listening to Vin Scully, the melodic way he broadcast the Dodgers games. I was transfixed by it. Then we were back living in New York, and in order to get the out-of-town games, I would take the keys to my father's car and I would sit in the driveway, turn the ignition on——

PLAYBOY: You were getting scores for your father, right?

COSTAS: Yeah. He was a gambler and I retrieved scores for him. It was the only way he could get scores. So I would sit there and turn the radio dial—calibrating it like a safecracker. The Indians were over here, but a twist over there is Cincinnati and just a little bit down the dial were the Tigers. The idea that you're sitting in the driveway on Long Island and the Reds are playing the Cardinals at Sportsman's Park, this had more of a theater of the imagination than a triple-header on DirecTV could ever have. It had a power to compel that was way beyond anything today.

PLAYBOY: So your father was a serious player?

COSTAS: He was a bright man with a tremendous vibrancy about him. He was also a big-time gambler. Here's a guy, an engineer, probably making $30,000, $40,000 a year, which was a good living in 1963. But he would have $2000 or $3000 worth of action going on some weekends.

PLAYBOY: He bet on all sports?

COSTAS: Whatever was in season. He would bet $500 a game on half a dozen games on a weekend. Guys named Fury and Three Finger came to our house to pay off and collect bets.

PLAYBOY: Did it ever get rough?

COSTAS: Not that I witnessed. But it would be implied. Guys showed up sometimes who looked like extras out of a B movie. Shiny suits and pinkie rings with snap-brim hats, going, "John around?" I'm 12 years old and I'm instructed to tell them, on a Sunday afternoon with both cars in the driveway, "He's not here." And they'd say, "Where is he?" "I don't know. He'll be back soon." They'd say, "Tell him Dominic was here."

PLAYBOY: How did this affect you?

COSTAS: I actually found it kind of entertaining and romantic, sort of. I thought my father was a very cool guy.

PLAYBOY: He never lost too much?

COSTAS: He often lost too much. He often was out the mortgage money. The best story, though, is when he went on an unbelievable winning streak at the start of the 1965 baseball season. He won 17 straight baseball bets, and that's just impossible. It can't be done. He's up $14,000. We go to a doughnut shop in Brooklyn to meet the bookie who's going to pay him off. So we sit down at the counter and there's this guy who looks like an extra out of *The Sopranos*. He greets my father, "That your boy?" My father goes, "Yeah." And he says, "Nice boy. Hey, kid, you drink milk?" I'm sitting there thinking, You putz. I'm 13—no, I drink tequila. Yes, I drink milk. And what I say is, "Yes, yes, I do." And so he beckons the counter guy. "Give the kid a glass of milk and a doughnut." Then he slides a brown paper bag across the counter to my father. Out to the car we go and my father sits behind the steering wheel, opens the bag and counts out $14,000 in 100-dollar bills, tax free, 1965. And at that moment I am sure, with the possible exception of Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays, my father was to me the most heroic man alive.

PLAYBOY: Did you know this was illegal?

COSTAS: Yeah. But I liked the codes. "Give me the Mets for a nickel. Give me

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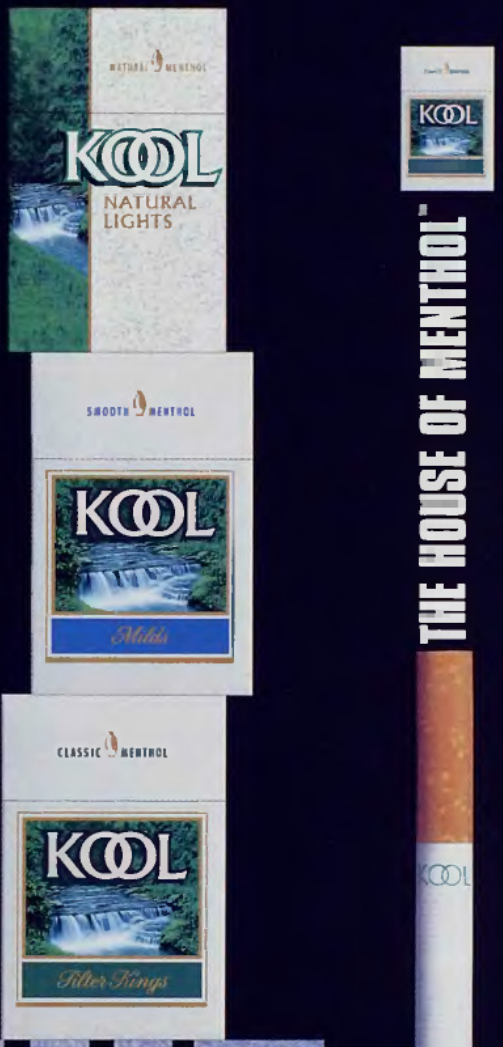

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the Giants for a dime." I knew what all this stuff meant. And by the time I was 11 or 12, you could give me any football game on Monday for the next Sunday and I'd give you the line off the top of my head. And be close.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever take up betting?

COSTAS: No. I saw what it did to my father. He had a horrible temper. When he would lose, he'd go nuts. He didn't get violent, but he got tremendously emotional and would yell and scream and throw things.

PLAYBOY: We understand that when you were watching a game with him that he'd bet on, if things were going well, he wouldn't allow you to move lest you jinx the action.

COSTAS: It happened several times. He knew how much I loved Mantle and this is where it got a little twisted. One time, in 1967, Mantle hit a home run in the bottom of the ninth at Yankee Stadium. I was such a student of Mantle that I could tell by the swing, right away, that it's going to be gone. And, as he swings, I get up and walk out. I go out into the yard and I can hear my father cursing as Mantle rounds the bases. He's thinking, The kid is happy about it. He cares more about someone he's never met than whether his family makes or loses $500. It was pretty fucked up.

PLAYBOY: How old were you when he died?

COSTAS: Eighteen. He dropped dead of a heart attack walking through JFK on a Friday afternoon. He was 42. He died without any insurance. And my mother had had an automobile accident four years earlier that left her unable to walk for several years. She had me and a 16-year-old daughter and she couldn't work because of her condition. No insurance and no savings. But at the wake, a guy named Steve Collins told me my dad was up when he died. Steve had immediately called the bookie and said that my father had told him to collect, knowing that if they found out he was dead, they'd never pay the money. "Here, give this to your mother," Steve said, and he hands me an envelope right there in the funeral parlor. Six thousand dollars. That was his estate.

PLAYBOY: So your dad never got to hear you broadcast?

COSTAS: No, which is a shame. But I think of it comically, too, because I can imagine him cursing at me through the television set for having the wrong inflection in my voice while his bet went down the drain. Or for not calling him from the booth when I found out someone had a pulled hamstring that would affect his bet. So I don't know if it's a curse or a blessing.

PLAYBOY: In your book, *Fair Ball*, you state that baseball is "broken," and you assign blame to the owners for losing sight of what their product should be, and to the Players Association for being

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stuck in the wrong decade. You assert that because of the financial imbalance between the haves and the have-nots, the season is rigged from the start. Looking back to April, how many teams had a chance to make the playoffs?

COSTAS: Out of 30, probably 12. But the problem is not how many teams in a given year are contenders. The problem is that the identity of those teams would probably be 80 or 90 percent the same from year to year. What I want is a situation that is fluid and flexible enough so that each team, if it plays its cards right, has a chance to be strong at any given time.

PLAYBOY: But if you look back in history, there were always teams that dominated, like the Gas House Gang Cardinals of the Thirties or the Oakland A's of the early Seventies. And the Yankees, pretty much always.

COSTAS: If those things are the result of normal baseball factors—bad luck, bad judgment, competition too stiff on the field—that's the way it goes. But if it's the result of unbridgeable economic differences, where the hand that's dealt when the game begins is so out of whack that it isn't even interesting, then I think you have a problem.

PLAYBOY: One of the solutions you propose in your book—that teams throw 50 percent of their local TV revenues into a pot to be shared by all 30 teams—sounds good on paper. But do you really think the owners will take any of these steps when the Basic Agreement runs out after next season?

COSTAS: If they don't, they might as well play real baseball in eight or nine cities and just play exhibition games in every other major league park. And give away Beanie Babies and souvenirs—because they're not selling competitive baseball, just ballpark ambience.

PLAYBOY: Your plan also calls for a higher minimum wage, so to speak, as well as a ceiling on salaries. Do you really think Donald Fehr of the Players Association will spend two minutes considering this?

COSTAS: If Don Fehr and associate general counsel Gene Orza, both of whom I like and respect, really wanted to be statesmen, they'd realize the best approach now is not to hold the line but to be part of creating a new paradigm for baseball in the 21st century. But for a long time now the Players Association has been fighting only for its narrow vested interests.

PLAYBOY: You hold up the settlement of the NBA lockout as a good example of owner-player partnership, when, in fact, most people believe that the players got the shaft.

COSTAS: The basketball owners had a good strategy, and after all this wringing of hands, I have yet to see an NBA player on a street corner with a tin cup. In fact, the average player saw his salary rise immediately under the new agreement, while only the Shaquille O'Neals have to get by with $15 million a year instead of $25 million. But the most important effect is this: San Antonio, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, Indianapolis—you couldn't even dream of placing a baseball franchise in any of those cities. And not only are there NBA franchises in those cities, every one of them is a contender.

PLAYBOY: You're suggesting baseball owners adopt a similar strategy?

COSTAS: Unless they can somehow convince the players to be part of a plan without a work stoppage, baseball has no choice but to shut the game down. The shame of the 1994 strike was not so much that it blew off the World Series. The real shame of it was that it blew off the Series and accomplished nothing.

PLAYBOY: Does it strike you that kids don't have the same passion for baseball that earlier generations had?

COSTAS: I think that's true. When the Yankees lost the 1960 World Series to Pittsburgh, I remember breaking down and crying. I was eight years old. I vowed that I wouldn't speak until the next baseball season. And I actually kept the vow into the next day, which for a loquacious eight-year-old is like an eternity. It was a day game and when I went to dinner, my mother explained to my father, "He's not speaking until the next baseball season starts." I sat there sulking, eyes welling with tears, as my father told me about other teams that were better than the team that won the World Series. "The 1954 Indians won 111 games when you were two years old, Robert. The Giants swept them four straight." I didn't care. The next day I went to school and some kids who were Dodgers fans taunted me. Also, I had to answer when the teacher called on me. So my plan went down the drain somewhere around 10 the next morning.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of the past, anyone who has listened to you knows you had a special affection for Mickey Mantle, who was your idol.

COSTAS: Growing up, he was my baseball hero, not my idol. Years later, when I was doing *Game of the Week* on Saturdays, I was with Tony Kubek, his old teammate, and Kubek started talking about how I knew everything about Mantle. Mickey became aware of this and he was very nice to me, and we just sort of wound up doing a lot of stuff.

PLAYBOY: If anyone had a two-edged reputation, it was Mantle.

COSTAS: Mickey is a poignant figure despite everything. When he died, men and women roughly my age felt something that could not be explained logically, but it was real. He knew he was not just the biggest star on his own team but, along with Willie Mays, the biggest star in baseball. But he never carried himself that way. There was always something poignant about him.

PLAYBOY: Poignant but, even in his worst moments, somehow not pathetic.

COSTAS: Mantle had his flaws, obviously. But in the last couple of years of his life, he redeemed himself. He confronted his alcoholism by going to the Betty Ford Clinic, and when liver cancer struck him down barely a year later, he handled his death and his dying with tremendous grace. To be the ballplayer he was, not just what he accomplished statistically but the way he made people feel when they watched him, to be this kind of figure and then to handle a public death with that kind of grace and humor, those things are actually more remarkable than the sorry story in the middle.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of sorry stories, is it true that O.J. Simpson tried to phone you from the Bronco the night of the slow-speed chase?

COSTAS: I didn't know about that until I went to visit him in jail.

PLAYBOY: Was your purpose in visiting him your own curiosity, or did you think you might learn something you could report?

COSTAS: I think I held out the possibility that there might have been some explanation for what happened. Not something that placed him elsewhere that night, but some aspect to his story that would be part of his defense. Even if it was incriminating, maybe it wasn't as incriminating.

PLAYBOY: Did you feel compelled to reassure him that you believed him?

COSTAS: No, but he offered a lot of thoughts about the evidence or things he felt were inaccurate that had been reported. I listened, and at the end of each I said, "You'll have a chance to tell your side in court."

PLAYBOY: Did he take the approach that you should know he couldn't possibly do anything like this?

COSTAS: I think there was an undercurrent of that.

PLAYBOY: Weren't you at Madison Square Garden broadcasting the NBA finals the night of the chase?

COSTAS: Yeah. Marv Albert was calling the game and I was hosting it, and Tom Brokaw kept breaking in with this weird tragedy playing itself out. Apparently, O.J. had his computer Rolodex and his cell phone. I think he must have been looking for someone who he felt would give him a forum and get it transmitted to the public. No one answered at my home so he called the studio and no one was there because we were at the Garden. Now, I don't know if this is 100 percent true, but I've heard from a couple of people that an audio man answered the phone. O.J. said: "Is Bob Costas there?" "Who's calling?" "O.J. Simpson." "Yeah, right." And the guy hangs up. The luckiest thing that ever happened to me is that I never received that telephone call.

(continued on page 149)

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CASUALTY IN THE WAR ON DRUGS

patrick dorismond just said no and ended up dead—another statistic in a senseless war

article By Jim Dwyer

THAT NIGHT after work, they stopped at the Wakamba Cocktail Lounge near Times Square, a working-class side pocket of a joint in the city's glittering wardrobe. No velvet ropes or sneering doormen here: Entry is by buzzer. At a glance, the bartender knew Patrick Dorismond and Kevin Kaiser were OK, recognizing them and a few other guys from their job. It was late in the evening of March 15, 2000.

The men worked for the 34th Street Partnership, a semiprivate group that provides neighborhood businesses with services the government is too tired or too distracted to provide. One such amenity was a private security force of uniformed men resembling police officers, including Kaiser and Dorismond. They passed their days sorting wheat from chaff, directing tourists to Macy's in Herald Square or Pennsylvania Station, or rousting derelicts, dope hustlers and other unsightly nuisances from the crowded streets.

At home in Flatbush, Dorismond had two kids and a girlfriend. He had grown up in Brooklyn, the son of Haitian immigrants. At the Wakamba, Dorismond and Kaiser stayed for two beers, long enough for Wednesday night to roll into Thursday morning. By 12:30 A.M., they could not face a long, late-night subway ride back out to their homes in Brooklyn.

"Let's get a cab," Dorismond said. Outside the

PAINTING BY JOHN THOMPSON

Wakamba
LOUNGE
543
BUD LIGHT
LOTTERY
TICKET
NYPD

Wakamba, they stopped at the corner of 37th Street and Eighth Avenue, watching for a taxi. Dorismond dialed a number on his cell phone.

"Yo, yo," a voice called from some shadow. "Yo, homey. Got some weed?"

Dorismond turned. The shadow drifted into shape, a street punk, exactly the sort he spent his days running off.

"Get the fuck out of here, man," Dorismond said.

"I just want some weed," the punk whined.

"I don't got none. Don't ask for none. Leave."

Kaiser had turned, noticing that Dorismond was annoyed and that the dirtbag was not alone. A few other shapes lurked nearby.

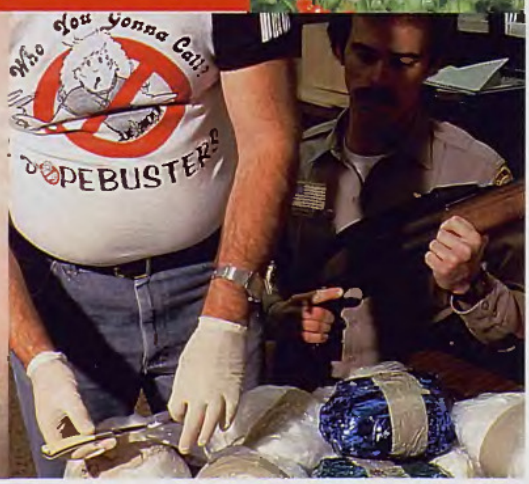
By now, the punk was making animal noises, snorting like a bull or something, trying to turn Dorismond's anger into a joke. Kaiser locked his eyes on the man and put a hand on Dorismond's shoulder to move him. Dorismond was pissed.

"Chill. Let it be," Kaiser suggested.

The punk barked. Another man stepped from the shadows. "Take your dog around the corner," Dorismond said.

"What are you going to do, rob me?" asked the punk.

Rudy Giuliani (top photo, middle) posed with Benjamin Boer of the U.S. Parole Commission and Senator Alfonse D'Amato to publicize their tough antidrug rhetoric in 1986. D'Amato had bought what he later said were vials of "crock" with a DEA undercover agent. Narco-trafficker Manuel Noriega (lower left) stayed out of jail while he helped Oliver North support the contras. Poppies in Afghanistan (right); narcs display seizures in Arizona (lower right) and Mexico (left), where authorities burned a 10-ton coke haul; a shakedown in Washington, D.C. (above).



Bizarre as the question seemed, Dorismond and Kaiser did not have long to think about it. The other shadows suddenly took on the forms of street skells, swarming around them. Kaiser yelled, "Get the gun."

At that instant, yet another firefight in the war on drugs—the American war that never ends—erupted around them on that street corner.

A black SUV pulled up to the curb, and men in police windbreakers piled out, hollering at them to get on the fucking ground, to put their hands on the wall. Dorismond and one of the shadows shouted and swung at each other, until the fracas finally found its punctuation mark: a single, ringing gun blast.

Dorismond was falling. Kaiser found himself shoved onto the sidewalk, face down, handcuffs snapped across his wrists.

"Cuff that shot motherfucker, too," ordered one of the officers.

"No, no, that's my friend. Those other guys were bothering us for weed," Kaiser tried to explain.

He was told to shut up. He turned his head. Near him on the sidewalk, Dorismond was trying to roll over. His face an inch above the filthy sidewalk, Dorismond gasped. Blood streamed from his mouth. Kaiser shuddered, then screamed Dorismond's name. "Say another word, I'll put your face on the ground," said a cop.

"It's those other guys, trying to buy weed," Kaiser whispered helplessly. But the cops were going through Dorismond's pockets, speaking urgent cop talk into radios.

His friend had fallen into a terrible stillness. Dorismond, with a bullet through the chest, was moving fast beyond help. Kaiser was searched, loaded into a police car and carried to a precinct station. For the next 12 hours, he answered questions from detectives, trying to rebuild the moment. Much of the time, he was cuffed to a chair. Early on, Kaiser asked about Dorismond, and though the detectives were vague about his condition, they told him that he had been shot by a police officer.

"What about the guys trying to buy the weed?" Kaiser asked. "Did you arrest them?"

Kaiser just didn't get it, so the detective finally laid it out. The guys trying to buy the weed, they weren't bad guys. They were police officers, too. That strange question—What are you going to do, rob me?—was actually a code for help sent over a radio transmitter to a backup team. Hearing it, the other undercovers rushed in. In the struggle with Dorismond, one of these cops

(continued on page 175)

"Whoops! Another bad hair day!"

spring break lasts all year at jamaica's adults-only resort

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEORGE GEORGIOU

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK EDWARD HARRIS

OF HEAT AND HEDONISM

Hedonism II and III are adults-only resorts in Jamaica where guests are encouraged to shed their inhibitions and clothes. When Hedonism III opened last September, we took a look for ourselves—and here we provide a peek for our readers. Hedonism III is situated near Runaway Bay on the north coast of Jamaica. The new facility offers the same amenities and activities as the original, plus a four-story see-through water slide that cuts through the disco. The water slide stays open until five A.M., and the disco closes when the last patron leaves. If this suggests a place where you can party all night, you've got the picture.

Hedonism II and III belong to the SuperClubs chain, started by John Issa, which his company calls "the father of the totally all-inclusive concept." Basically, it works like this: You pay up front, and while at the resort, all your expenses—food, drinks, even tips—are

There's more than one way to indulge yourself at Hedonism III. When it's party time at the disco (above and below), the action can get wild and hot, and inhibitions go up in flames. But find a cool, secluded spot (opposite), and the world takes on a romantic pace.

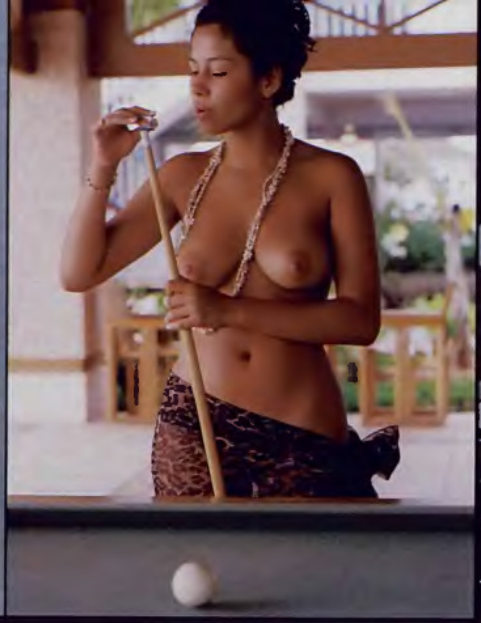
Food and drink are a big part of the Hedonism III social regimen. It is not at all unusual to encounter someone in the buff on the buffet line. Our advice is to just act natural and be yourself—and be sure to leave room for dessert. In addition to traditional cocktails served by the pool, it turns out that drinks are welcome in the pool. Park your glass on the most convenient shelf. In the hot tub, a bottle of bubbly is a great way to break the ice.

covered. The all-inclusive plan has proved popular at many resorts. Guests at Hedonism say it solves the primary problem of vacationing au naturel: Where do you keep your wallet?

Hedonism, you will recall, was advanced by the Greek philosopher Aristippus in the fifth century B.C. It held that pleasure was the highest good and was best achieved by the complete gratification of all of one's sensual desires. A century later, Epicurus and his followers developed the belief that pure hedonism could best be obtained through the rational control of one's desires.

The philosophy behind the Hedonism resorts is

A little water, a little sunshine, three sexy women in a playful frame of mind and body—life is a day at the beach. When it comes to making friends with the most beautiful women on the property, we can't guarantee you'll do as well as we did. After all, we're pros—and we have a lens with remarkable magnetic properties. Just the same, take a camera in case a photo opportunity arises.



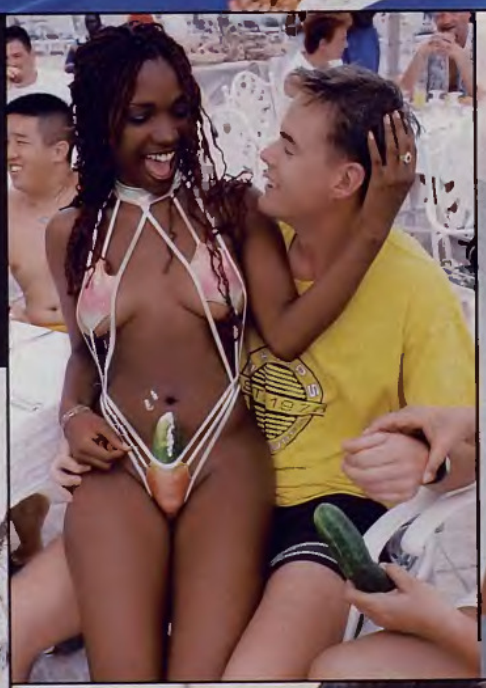
The "anything goes" attitude at Hedonism III often results in group party activity. It also encourages an open-mindedness that can lead to quieter options and encounters: boy meets girl, girl meets girl, girl takes her best shot, the workout after the workout, a bare walk on the boardwalk. And with guests doing as they please, it's statistically inevitable that you will catch sight of someone or two in the act of doing something interesting.

more closely aligned with the precepts of Aristippus than with those of Epicurus. But, from a practical point of view, the closest it comes to any ancient philosophy is the weekly toga party, which one travel brochure calls the best since the days of Caesar (how would they know?).

Hedonism offers the same recreational options as most warm-weather resorts: snorkeling, scuba diving, windsurfing, sailing, kayaking and waterskiing; land sports such as tennis, golf, basketball, aerobics and cycling. But at Hedo, as it is known to those in the know, you can play volleyball in the nude, on land or in the water.

Other group activities are designed to break down inhibitions and activate the libido: oil and sumo wrestling, wet T-shirt and limbo contests, costume and dance parties, competitions for best tan and whitest butt, laser karaoke,

He screams, she screams, they all scream for the human sundae (above right). In keeping with the adult summer camp atmosphere at Hedonism III, there is a full schedule of erotic party games on the activity menu. There's never a shortage of volunteers—or willing spectators—for such traditional crowd pleasers as wet T-shirt contests, oil-wrestling matches, Twister and body painting. In addition to scheduled events, some visitors pioneer their own activities, such as impromptu explorations into uses for cucumber (right).



Hedonism III has three swimming pools, one exclusively for nude bathers. There are two beaches—a nude and a prude. Lounging clothed in nude areas is considered rude. There's rarely any trouble finding someone willing to help you with the hard-to-reach spots. The hot tub (below, right) is one of the best places to hang out, because people feel free to live out their fantasies. Despite all the action, there are opportunities to get away from it all (below, left) and get away with it all (far right).

Twister and body painting. Every night there's a party with a different theme (from pajamas to reggae), each an excuse to wear outrageous outfits. Think of it as a never-ending spring break or a year-round summer camp, and you don't have to write home to your parents (or your kids).

Most of this merriment is enhanced by the drinks that flow freely throughout the day and night. Specialty drinks are served at six locations, including the swim-up bar. At the nude bar, shots are poured strategically over someone's body and lapped up by a companion—who then serves as the designated diver.

Much of the Hedo social scene takes shape during mealtime, at the four restaurants that range from pasta to rasta to sushi to continental. The emphasis on food and drink occasionally leads to an intemperate situation. But most guests at Hedonism practice excess in moderation. And for those who exceed their limit, attendants are attentive about carrying them back to their rooms.

If you go to Hedonism expecting to find throngs of beautiful women, you'll likely be disappointed, though you'll see your share of women in thongs. The guests at Hedo look like people you see every day, on the bus, at the grocery store, around the office. Although the resort offers the use of state-of-the-art exercise equipment, it's apparent that some of the guests have never exercised that option.

Single men outnumber single women, and couples make up about half the clientele. But some of the couples like to swing, some like to swap and some like to watch.

There have been enough

(text concluded on page 161)

ELEVEN THINGS You DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW About Spinal Tap

By Chip Rowe

1 **The heavy metal band Spiñal Tap formed in England in December 1966, but it wasn't until the 1984 release of "This Is Spiñal Tap" that its fame grew like a fungus. Directed by Martin DiBergi, the rockumentary (if you will) returns to video, DVD and select theaters in September.**

2 *Creem* found the film to be "a self-indulgent bore" that contains "long stretches without anything even remotely amusing being said or done. The music is atrocious, and you'll spend lots of time yawning or wishing you'd brought earplugs." But that's nitpicking, isn't it?

3 Soon after the release of *TIST*, a 4.5-hour bootleg director's cut began to circulate among fans. It includes scenes of sex and drug use that DiBergi cut from the film. In one, a nude groupie searches for her lost contact lens (apparently so she can see where she left her knickers).

4 **Tap dismissed the brutally honest rockumentary as a hatchet job. "People are not interested in things that go well," said guitarist Nigel Tufnel. "They don't want to see headlines that say BABY CHIPMUNK FOUND ON HIGHWAY, UNHARMED, WARM AND FLUFFY. But if you say OVERWEIGHT MAN GETS HEAD STUCK IN TOILET, SWEATING AND SMELLING BAD, well, they'll run down and buy that one."**

5 **A former member of the all-white Jamaican band Skatface, well-endowed bassist Derek Smalls studied design before joining the legions of Satan. The Nilford native is an accomplished Monopoly player and orchid grower.**

6 **If not involved in music, lead singer David St. Hubbins says he would be a "full-time dreamer." In one deleted scene, he reveals, "My thoughts onstage are about copulating with each female in the audience—of age."**

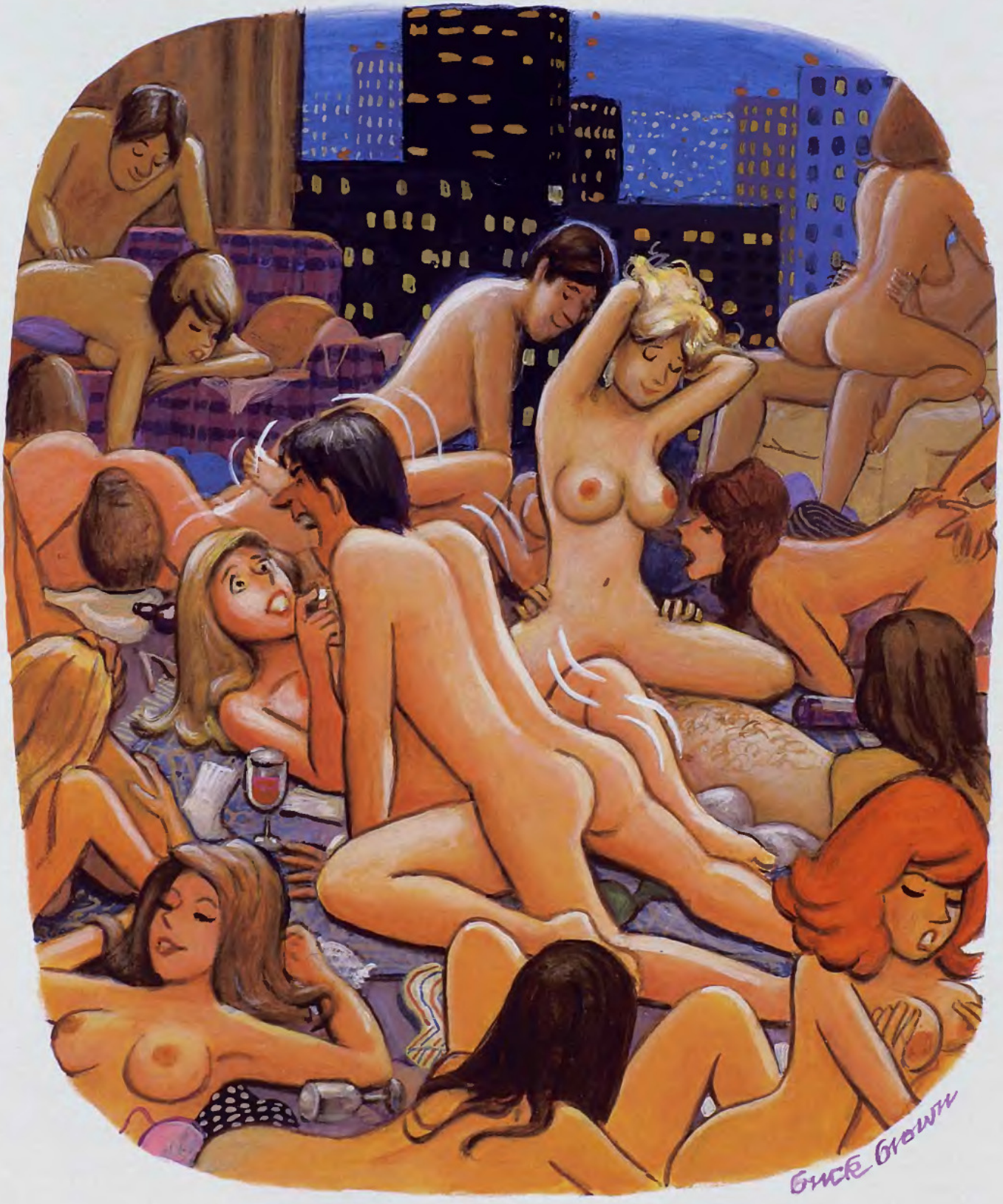
7 **After the 1982 tour, Nigel Tufnel served in the Swiss Army before retiring to his inventing shed (folding wineglass, neckless guitar) and testing a rare amp that goes to infinity. He enjoys Nerf chess because "no one gets hurt."**

8 **Tap's first hit was *(Listen to the) Flower People*. A band biographer later wrote that the song "captures the band in a state of innocence, imparting its belief not only that flower people exist, but that we should listen to them."**

9 **The band's most covered song, *Big Bottom*, includes the lyrics, "My baby fits me like a tlesh tuxedo/I love to sink her with my pink torpedo." Nigel: "Women will say *Big Bottom* is sexist, but aside from women, who says it?"**

10 **Tap has employed a number of drummers. Two spontaneously combusted, one choked on someone else's vomit and a fourth perished in a bizarre gardening accident. The most recent, Ric Shrimpton, is presumed dead.**

11 **Is Tap real? The 1984 film, which was mostly improvised, assumed audiences would figure it out, but the first video release had a disclaimer. Tap's 17th album, *Break Like the Wind*, reached 61 on the charts. Real enough.**



"Breath mint?"

Crazy Hand Jive

be careful—these gizmos may be smarter than you

Handheld personal computers are no longer just glorified address books and calendars. The latest from Palm Computing, Hewlett Packard, Casio and others can access e-mail and let you play games or listen to digital music downloaded from the Net. You can even exchange phone numbers via infrared signals beamed from HPCs, a cool trick in a crowded bar. Because choosing a specific model among the dozens available can be daunting, we tested a handful of the hottest handhelds. Here's the lowdown on our favorites. More than 70 percent of the people who own HPCs are Palm devotees. The reason? Simplicity. Palm devices—from the entry-level IIIe to the top-of-the-line Palm VII—are easy to use. You can zip through the menu options on the Palm VII without even checking the manual. And using the pen stylus to input information (phone numbers, appointments or other data) is a breeze. Palm's "Graffiti" method of handwriting recognition identifies symbols that closely resemble letters, numbers and punctuation. It takes only minutes to learn the strokes, compared with the hours required to master earlier forms of handwriting technology.

Currently, there are *(concluded on page 148)*

Hewlett Packard has a reputation for building top-notch computer gear, including its new HP Jornada 545 Color Pocket PC. Thanks to improvements in Microsoft's HPC operating system, you'll be plugging information into the calendar and phone book, firing off e-mail and downloading music from the web within seconds of charging the device's internal lithium-ion battery. And a USB connection ensures speedy transfer of data to your PC. Price: about $500.

Casio's E-115 Cassiopeia is pumped up with 32 megabytes of RAM and a 131-megahertz processor. Like all HPCs running Windows Pocket PC, it offers the option of inputting data via your own handwriting (with virtually flawless recognition technology) or a keyboard that appears on the device's color display. The E-115 can also serve as an electronic book with the Microsoft Reader program and functions as a digital voice recorder and music machine. Price: about $600.

If you're looking for a bare-bones electronic organizer, Vtech's Helio Personal Digital Assistant can store your schedule, contacts and to-do lists. The Helio syncs with your PC and can even send and receive e-mail. At $179, it's among the most affordable HPCs and it offers the same reliable handwriting recognition as the more expensive Pocket PC devices. It comes in eight flashy colors, including metallic charcoal, translucent lime and metallic blue (shown above).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES IMBROGNO

electronics by Beth Tomkiw

Compaq's iPAQ H3600 (top) is the smallest and slimmest HPC running the Windows-based operating system. The iPAQ is about the size of a calculator and is powered by a 206 MHz Intel Strong ARM processor and 32 megs of RAM. It syncs with your PC via a USB connection and offers all the capabilities of its competition, including a built-in voice recorder (so you can attach voice messages to e-mail) and the ability to play digital music. Price: about $500.

Handspring's Visor Deluxe ($250) combines the simplicity of the Palm operating system with the ability to expand the HPC's functionality through Springboard modules that slide into a slot on the back of the device. The Springboard eye module shown above ($150) turns the Visor into a digital camera. The eye module shoots color and black-and-white images at resolutions perfect for attaching to e-mail or beaming to other PalmOS units via infrared sensor.

Palm makes the most popular handheld personal computers. The Palm VII ($450) features wireless technology for handling e-mail, trading stocks and grabbing news and other text-based info from the Net. Palm also offers a full-size foldable keyboard that's only slightly bigger than the Palm VII when zipped into its portable pouch ($100). Pair a Palm with Kodak's PalmPix ($180), and it can snap 24-bit VGA (640 x 480) pictures and upload them to your PC.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 168.
ONLINE, TRY EDITORSPICKS.PLAYBOY.COM.

PLAYBOY'S COLLEGE FICTION CONTEST WINNER

The Collection Treatment

By Yael Schonfeld / San Francisco State University

FROM HER HOTEL WINDOW, AUDRA WATCHED WILL FINN RUN. WHAT WAS HE RUNNING FROM? WOULD IT CATCH UP WITH HIM?

The Aurora Hotel was a scab-colored building in a bad part of town. Its two front doors, the first made of latticed iron and the second of thick, heavy wood, were always closed and usually locked. The only way it could be identified as a hotel was by the hand-painted sign suspended from one of the first-floor windows. FULL BATH, the sign declared. COLOR TV. DAILY, WEEKLY AND MONTHLY RATES. SAFE! The last word, safe, and its accompanying exclamation point had actually made Audra laugh out loud when she saw them for the first time, and Audra did not laugh often.

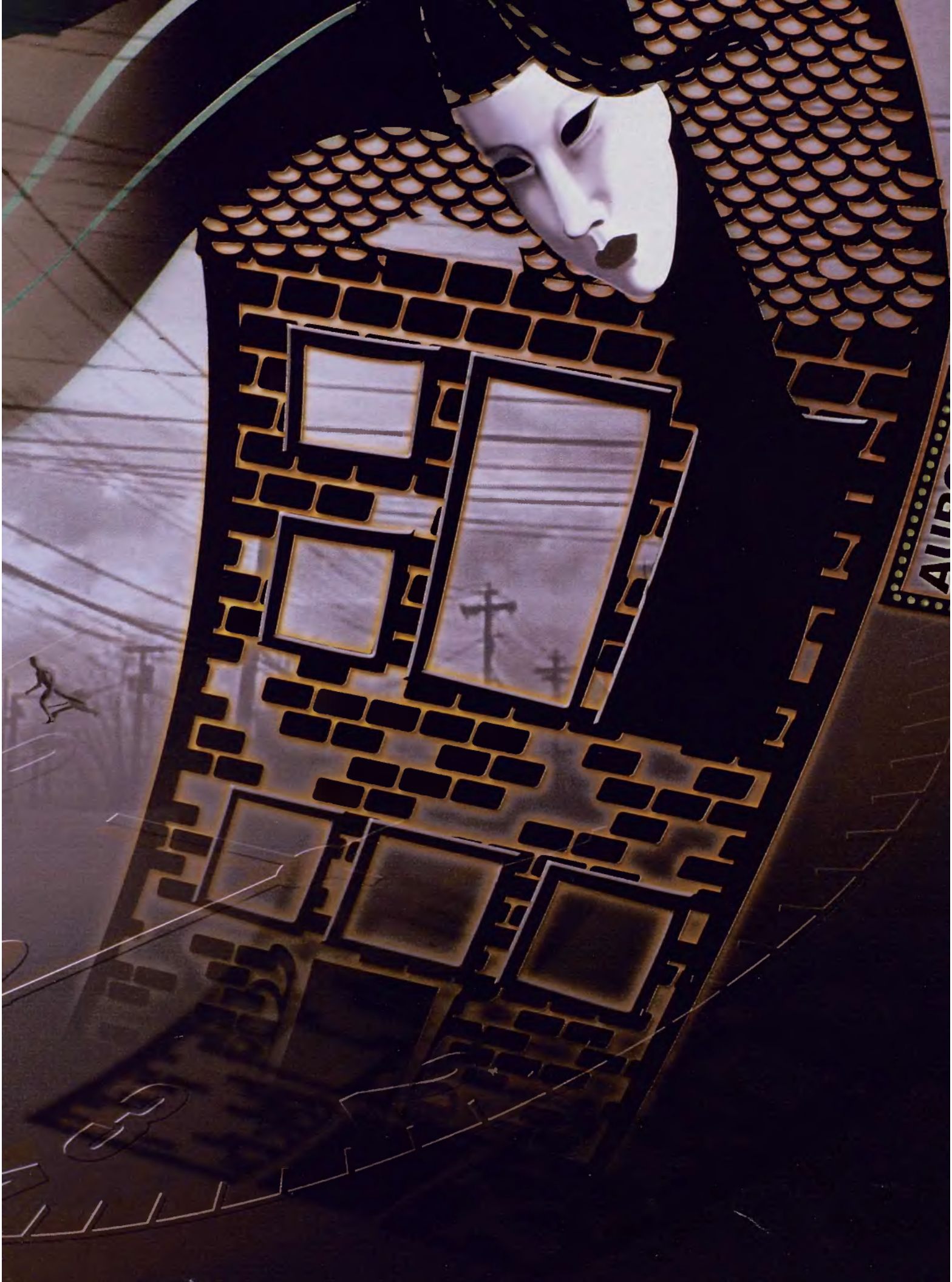
She was not sure exactly what full bath meant. The color TV part of the sign was a blatant lie. There was no TV, color or otherwise, in Audra's room. There was a small sink in the corner, but the hot and cold water could not be turned on at the same time. Freezing cold or scalding hot—this was a choice Audra faced every time that she used the sink.

When she paid for her first month's stay at the Aurora, Audra was told by the manager, Sophia Croff, that a maid would be coming by every week to change her linen. This was also not true. There was no maid. Sometimes Sophia herself would stride around the hotel carrying sheets and pillowcases and handling her heavy key ring with a self-important jangle. Audra believed that she did this merely as an excuse to enter the tenants' rooms and poke into their possessions. This could be done satisfactorily only in their absence, and since Audra was usually present, her sheets had yet to be changed. She did not mind. She was not fond of changes, anyway. If the smell got to be a problem, Audra thought, she could turn the sheets over. That would suffice for a while.

Many of the rooms looked out only on the grim gray fire escape at the hollow center of the building, but Audra's room was privileged in this respect: It offered a view of the street. When she stood by the window, Audra could watch the cars going by on the road. She could see people settling into the plastic chairs of Eddie's Diner on the other side of the street. If she stood by her window at exactly 7:30, as she did almost every morning, she could see Will Finn set out for his morning run.

Will's thick, fair hair was always shower-wet at 7:30 in the morning. He would pause just outside the latticed iron door, jogging in place for several minutes before he began the actual run. No matter how cold the day was, he would be wearing shorts and a white T-shirt. From her second-story window, in a dark, long-sleeved cotton shirt that had not been changed for days, Audra watched him with a pleasant sense of bafflement and wonder. His skin seemed to glimmer with an almost unnatural cleanliness. How could he achieve it here? They shared the same

ILLUSTRATION BY JUNG-SUN KIM



shower, at the end of the second-floor corridor. The hot and cold water in the shower could be turned on at the same time, but even the combined efforts never amounted to more than a pallid trickle. If she stood under it for hours, she would never be as clean as that.

And the thought of running for pleasure here, in this place, was equally alien. It was, Audra thought, almost as funny as SAFE! though it did not make her laugh. Standing by her window at various hours of the day, Audra had seen plenty of people running. But none of them, she was sure, thought of it as jogging. None of them did it for fun.

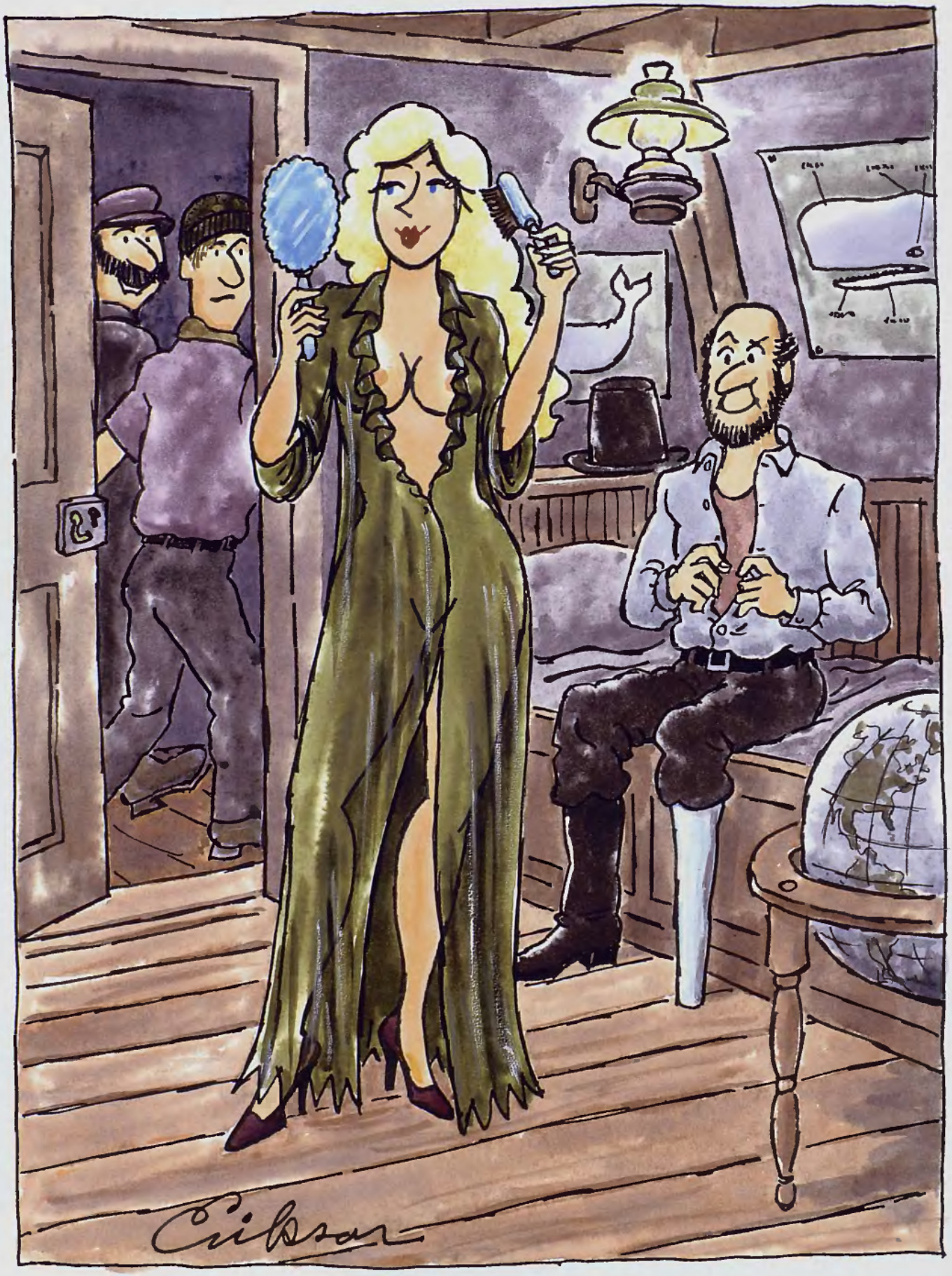
After jogging in place for several minutes, Will would turn right and start running down the street. Audra would watch him run past Checks Cashed 24 Hours a Day and Eternal Bliss Chinese Restaurant and another hotel, the St. Elliott. She watched until he was a distant blur of steady, pounding motion. She watched until he disappeared completely. After that, she shifted and stretched slowly. She shrugged her shoulders. She ran her hand through her dark, delicate hair, dull and brittle from lack of nourishment. This was usually the extent of her own daily exercise.

•

Audra knew Will Finn's name, as well as several other things about him, because she had talked to him. This was not a common practice among Aurora's residents. Most of the residents were men, and most of the men were furtive. They scurried down corridors, hunted desperately for keys, avoided eye contact and mumbled

(continued on page 120)

Each year the students in Marshall Arisman's illustration class at New York's School of Visual Arts compete to illustrate the winning story in PLAYBOY's College Fiction Contest. The art that was chosen for *The Collection Treatment*, the story that won the 15th annual contest, is by Jung-Sun Kim (see previous page). The runners-up, on this page (clockwise from top left), are by Annabelle Verhoye, Renato Alarcao, Matt Duquette, Han Jong Lee, Sam Kim and Peter Sawchuck.



"That's the Cap'n for you—totally obsessed with white whales and platinum blondes."

IT'S LOGIC 101. BEFORE YOU CAN GO FOR HER PANTS SHE NEEDS TO GO FOR YOURS

BACK TO CAMPUS FASHION

style by JOSEPH De ACETIS

Three men waiting for Godot (opposite page). Or at least looking for *Waiting for Godot*. At left, Matt is set to prowl the stacks in a shirt by Von Heusen and pants by Nautica. He's already made a propitious match on his feet—Gold Toe socks and shoes by Johnston and Murphy. Andrew sits in the center, in shirt and pants by Ralph Lauren. "Polished is the message for fall," says Keith Shore of DKNY. "Try dressing in tailored items with classic textures." Joel, at far right, is a case in point: The shirt and vest are by DKNY. The cords are by Gap and his sneakers are by Nike.

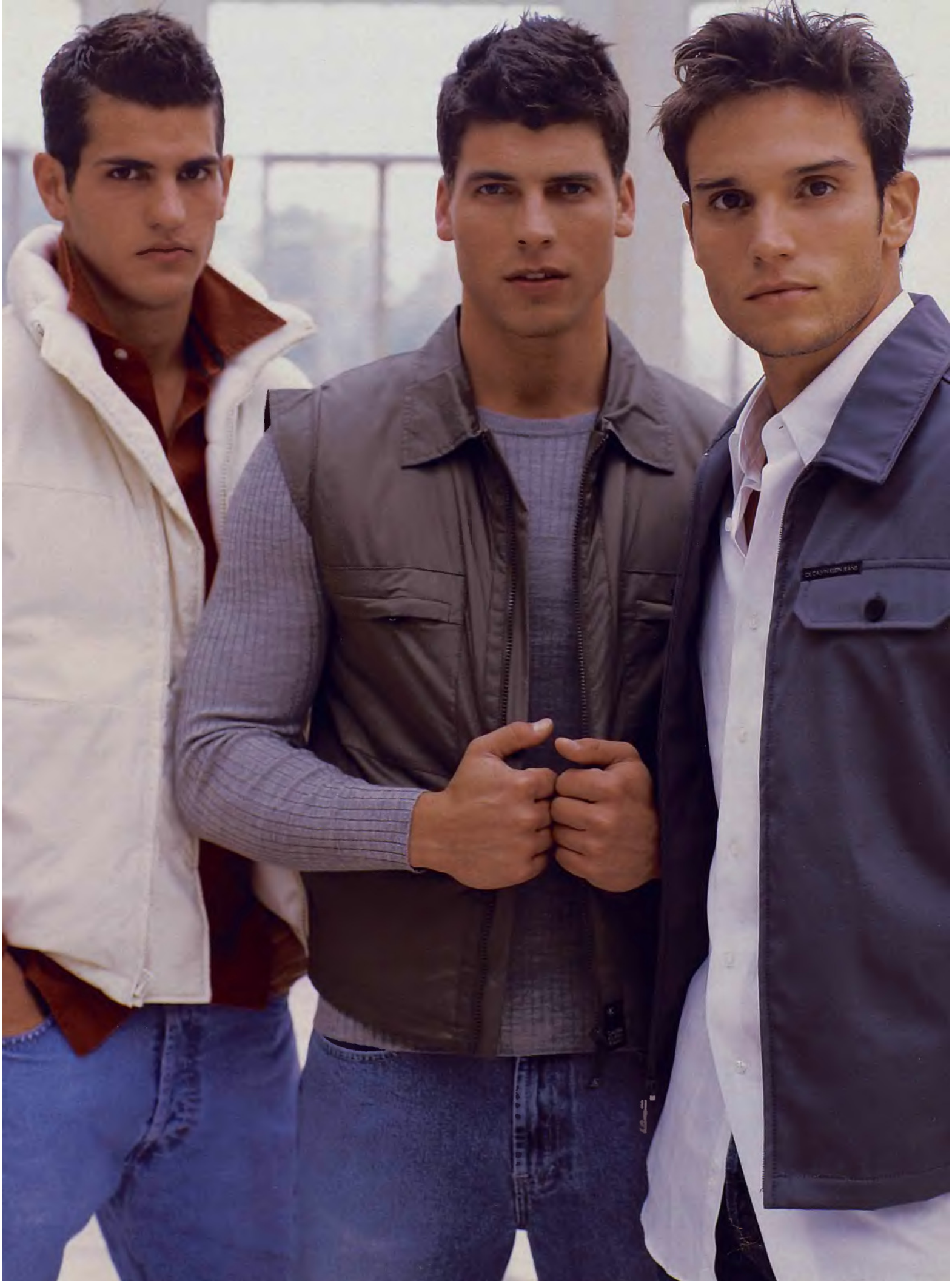
Don't look now, but people are talking about you. Polished, hot, coordinated, discerning—these are just some of the words they are using. No, it's not the girl down the hall and her friends. (At least not yet.) The people who have a crush on you are players in the young men's fashion industry: Nike. Fila. DKNY. Designers pay attention to the choices you make. That means function has met fashion and they're merging faster than a pair of horny psych majors. Reversible shirts, convertible pants—clothes are becoming increasingly versatile. It's all about poise. As in, "He has a lot of composure." As in, "He is ready to strike." It's a race-you-to-the-corner-bar mentality. Like a game of *Survivor*, *Big Brother* and *Dawson's Creek*, your every move is being watched. And yes, this time we are talking about your cute neighbor. So get some clothes that look fun to jump into and out of. And remember the most important accessory of all—the sock on your doorknob that tells your roommates not to come knocking. Otherwise you'll really give them something to talk about.

Look what Joel checked out at the library. At left, you'll find a true rarity. She seems like a well-read sort to boot. He looks like a first edition himself, wrapped in a leather jacket by Emporio Armani. His iridescent shirt is also by Emporio Armani.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROGER NEVE

At top left, we have a meeting of the Scull and Boats Society. When you get outside, you want your clothes to be fresh. Back at the stern, Matt's in a long-sleeve and T-shirt combination. His shirts and shorts are all by Hugo Boss. His feet are in Nike sneakers. Middlemen Andrew bounces by in a sweatshirt by Ralph Lauren, nylon pants by Emporio Armani and Nike sneakers. Joel once again emerges as the leader in a nylon long-sleeve T and nylon pants from CK by Calvin Klein. His sneakers are Filo. On the opposite page, the trio re-forms. From left to right, Matt wears a Tommy Hilfiger shirt and a vest by Tommy Jeans. His jeans, on the other hand, are Levi's. Andrew's sweater is by BCBG. His vest and jeans are CK by Calvin Klein. Joel's shirt and jacket are also CK by Calvin Klein, while his jeans are Levi's. They seem to have lost the boat, but nobody seems too concerned.

Below, the gang hits some grass. Group dynamics are a lot like team sports. You want to stand out, but you don't want to be a ball hog. So if you're trying to impress a girl while among friends, you have to let the game come to you. Don't force your remarks and don't overdo it when it comes to clothes. (You don't want to look prettier than she does now, do you?) Matt, at far left, has the right idea. His pants and shirt are by Tommy Jeans. The pants are brushed cotton, which must be why he keeps touching himself. Nathalie is wearing a wool hat by Gap. It looks good on everyone no matter what your haircut. That's a man's sweater vest on her, too. It was designed by Gene Meyer. (And if you're really hung up on your girlfriend, buy her BCBG pants and sandals. Just be careful when you make comparisons between them.) That's a long-sleeve T-shirt by Fila on Joel and a Ralph Lauren shirt on Andrew. Monica wears clothes by Tommy Jeans. As for the ball boys in the background, the sticks and the equipment are by Warrior Lacrosse. The apparel and the custom sticks are by Lacrosse Unlimited.



Ah, so that's where we left it. Back on the dock (left), our men anticipate the start of the crew seasan. At left, Joel wears Nautica head-to-toe. To his right, Andrew daes a little bit of nothing in a sleeveless hooded sweatshirt and sweatpants by Nike. "The big story in active apparel is all about maximum value," says Robert Mitchell of Nike. "Men want products that give them more far their money." This page below, the guys take it to the parking lot. Left to right, Matt wears a mesh shirt and pants by Fila, and a hooded shell by Nautica Competition. Andrew struggles in a windbreaker by Nike. Joel's jacket is by Nautica Competitian. He also wears Fila pants. "We took a saccer silhouette and made it in a dressier Italian fabric," says Sandra Colon of Fila. "Guys have gotten saphisticated when it comes to fabrics and styling." Even if they settle their disagreements the old-fashioned way.

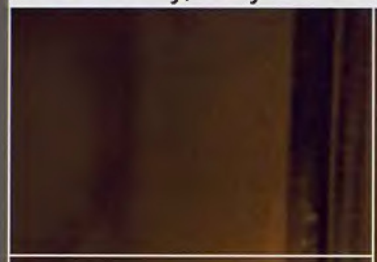
A word about calors. You'll hear a lot af talk abaut absidian blue, evergreen, olive oil, winterberry and putty. It's all good. The earth tones will offset the modern vibes of synthetic fabrics. Just because it's nylon and it's a track suit daesn't mean it has to be parrot green. Which brings us ta a tauchier subject: boxers versus briefs versus freeballing. We don't need to tell you how ta pack your bags. We just urge you to cansider the variety of boxers an the market. To avoid the mistake of looking like you are training far the Lennox Lewis–Frans Botha bout, avoid anything taa silky ar taa shiny. Take a glance at the action on the oppasite page. Then take an even quicker glance at the guys. Yes, af course, the boxers look better on her—anything (and nathing) would. Want to admire a woman like Nathalie while she prances around in your undies? Put together a collection of sharp boxer shorts. From left to right, Jan wears a fitted pair fram Abercrombie and Fitch. Andrew stands up in shorts by Brooks Brathers. Darling Nathalie stands out in a pair by Adidas. Matt and Joel wear twa mare sets fram Brooks Brothers. Next stap: the shawers.

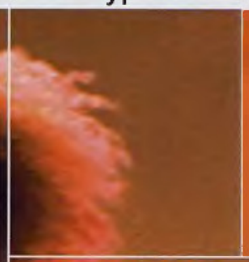
HAIR BY RINGO YIP/INDEPENDENT
MAKEUP BY VANESSA SCALI/LOOK
FASHION ASSISTANT: MERIEN ORLET
LOCATION: DOWLING COLLEGE, OAKDALE, NY

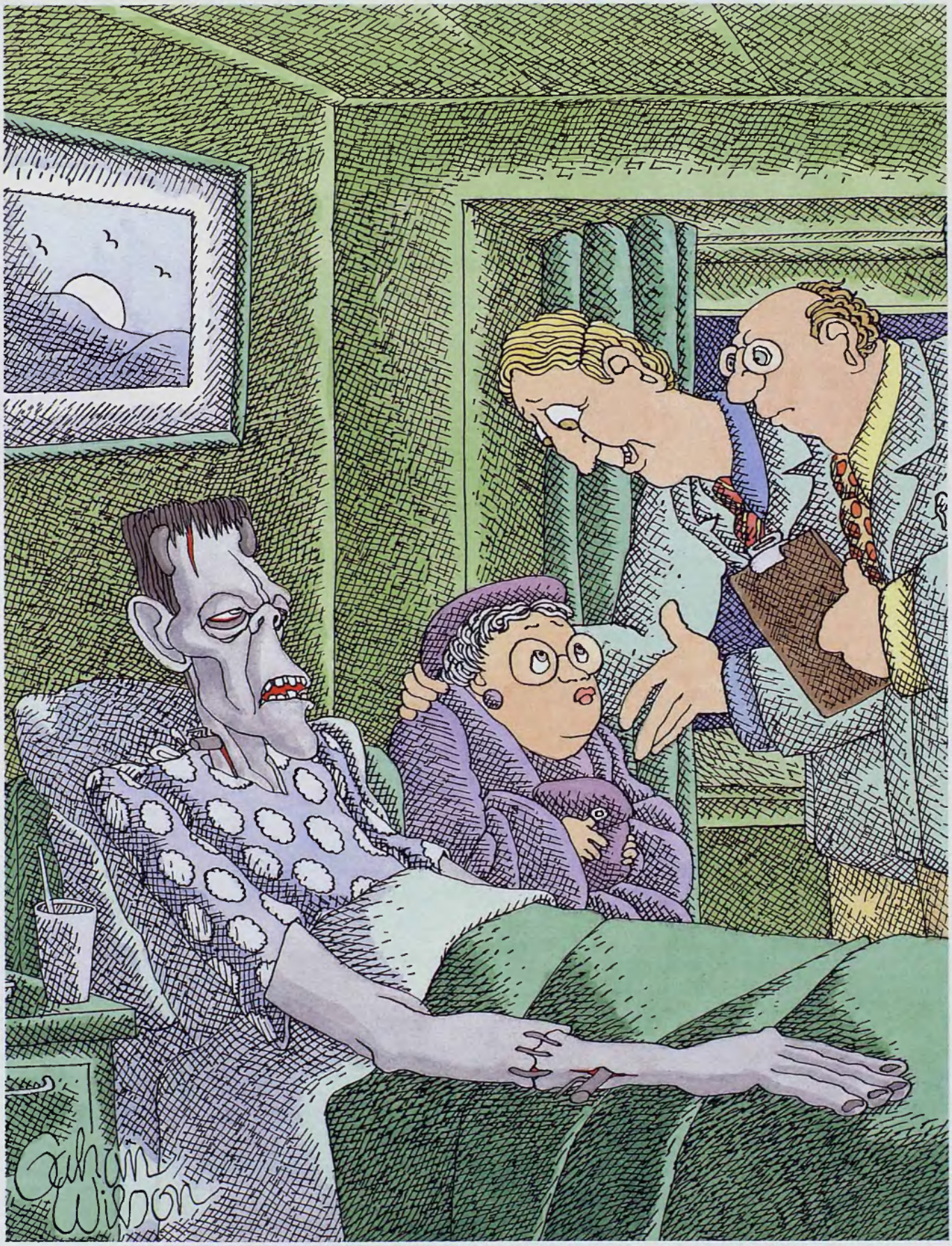
IT'S ALL HYPE

if it's cheeky, sexy and flashy as hell, credit video director hype williams

Hype Williams is hip-hop's most wanted video director, a college drapout who grew up in Queens and paid his dues manning the smake machine an film sets. Williams is the guy behind some of the most visually rich clips: *Gettin' Jiggy Wit' It* by Will Smith, *I'll Be Missing You* by Puff Daddy, *Sweetheart* by Mariah Carey, *The Rain* by Missy Elliott, *No Scrubs* by TLC and *Big Pimpin'* by Jay-Z. Known far using multiple camera speeds, fish-eye lenses, reverse angles, flamboyant castumes and futuristic sets, Williams halds court in the *Guinness Book of World Records* under costliest special effects in a video ($2.4 million for *What's It Gonna Be?* by Busta Rhymes aad Janet Jackson). He even managed ta make khaki pants look cool in a Gap commercial. His latest project is *Follow the Leader*, a behind-the-scenes book abaut his video shoots. "I helped put that larger-than-life spin an the music," Williams says. (We never said he was modest.) "If rap videos were big, I made them look bigger. Rap artists were talented, but I made them laak more talented. Hip-hap wasn't a fashian thing befare I was doing it. It was never like it is now, where designers like Danatella Versace knaw the rappers. It's similar to the Farties, when certain musicians, artists and actars were part of a fashion-design clique. Now, it's us. It's Lauryn Hill and Busta." Williams' high-glass style is nat far everyane. Thaugh his feature film directorial debut was named mavie of the year at *The Source*'s 1999 Hip-Hop Music Awards, critics deemed *Belly* a flop. The flick was also slammed by Magic Johnsan, whase theater chain refused to show it because af its "overwhelmingly negative and violent depictians af African Americans, as well as its potential to create disruptive situatians far our theaters' patrons and employees." Unscathed, Williams respanded with trademark aplomb: "Censaring this film is akin to turning a blind eye to what's happening in today's cities." And then he picked up his camera and cantinued on his way.







"The staff of this hospital would like to assure you, Mrs. Smith, that the brain of Mr. Smith ending up in Frankenstein's monster was entirely unintentional."

miss october proves that beauty is at least skin deep

Arts and Croft

NICHOLE VAN CROFT is no ordinary Southern belle, and it's written all over her skin. Her German ancestors introduced the use of herbs for beauty purposes in Florida, a practice that has rubbed off on Miss October. "I read medical books all the time," says Nichole, a native of Jacksonville. "I must have 10 zillion herb and physiology books from my mom. But even before I knew my family's history I had a little garden and grew peppermint and other herbs. I'm 26, but I look younger because I take really good care of my skin and use natural stuff like buttermilk and cornmeal on my face."

Sounds delicious. But even though Nichole wants to launch her own line of skin-care products someday, don't get the impression that this future beauty entrepreneur is all primp and no play. "I played every sport in high school: volleyball, basketball, and I even broke my collarbone playing football," Nichole explains. "I was voted homecoming queen and it was such a dilemma because I was playing in the homecoming basketball game. I gave up my crown so I could play basketball."

After attending high school in Arkansas, Nichole went to college in Memphis, then moved to Las Vegas and transferred to a school in Arizona. Her parents also moved to Sin City, an unusual place to call home given their conservative Christian background. "I'm still somewhat religious, but it's more of a theory," she explains. "I believe God created the world—I don't believe in Darwinism or anything like that. I'm really glad I was raised that way, because it kept me out of a lot of trouble. I never wanted to embarrass my parents. I'm not rigid about religion—I know I'm not going to go to hell for posing in PLAYBOY."

Nichole didn't experience fire and brimstone, but she did go all the way to a recording studio in "Hell-Ay" to cut her first album, scheduled for release this month. "It's like Britney but with funk," she says. "I collaborated with somebody at EMI who writes songs for Mariah Carey and TLC." Has becoming a pop star always been this blonde's ambition? "I sang in the church choir and at my parents' wedding when they got remarried," she says. "I've always

Does Nichole feel like she intimidates other women? "Yeah, and I don't know why because I'm really extra sweet," she says. "I get along with tough girls. I have one friend who's a model and smokes cigarettes and she's real cool. I get along great with girls who are like Angelina Jolie. I really like girls with attitude who are funky or offbeat."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA
CENTERFOLD BY ARNY FREYTAG

Even though she's Miss October and Halloween is just around the corner, Nichole tells us she isn't particularly fond of scory movies. "I turned off *Scream* halfway through," she confesses. "I'm such a wimp. I can't even wotch *Jaws*. But recently I did see *Sleepy Hollow* and I really liked it. So that's my favorite scary movie—and I love Christina Ricci in it."

dabbled. This CD is major important to me." Since promoting a debut CD is a time-consuming affair, Nichole is in search of a man with a plan for romance. "I like a take-charge attitude," she says. "You want to get in the car and have him say, 'OK, we're going here and we're doing this.' It's so sexy, and it makes you feel so womanly." PLAYBOY photographers have approached Nichole since she was 18, but she finally said yes to one who introduced himself as she was eating pizza in South Beach. "It makes sense now with my CD coming out," she says. "I'm the queen of timing."

MISS OCTOBER
PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH
Nichole Van Croft

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Nichole Van Croft

BUST: 36DD WAIST: 24 HIPS: 36

HEIGHT: 5'5" WEIGHT: 115

BIRTH DATE: 11·05·73 BIRTHPLACE: Jacksonville, FL

AMBITIONS: To be a millionaire before 35. Get married so I can have babies.

TURN-ONS: Intelligent guys with a lot of class.

TURNOFFS: People who do not want the best for others.

THE ONE THING THAT YOU'D CHANGE ABOUT YOURSELF: I would be more neat, because everyone I know calls me the biggest slob they ever met.

THE MOST IMPULSIVE THING YOU'VE DONE: I talked my two best friends into withdrawing from a semester of college with me. We received a tuition refund and went to Vegas and partied until the money was gone.

Aqua-Net days

Having fun during the Miami Grand Prix

Poser

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A married couple was driving down the interstate when the wife said, "Herb, I want a divorce." The husband said nothing but slowly increased his speed. "I've been having an affair with your best friend," she continued, "and he's a better lover than you are. I want the house, the kids, the car, the checking account and the credit cards. Is there anything you want?" she finally asked.

"No, I have everything I need."

"You do?"

Just before they hit a wall at 90 mph, he replied, "Yep. I've got the air bag."

As she prepared to get into bed with her date, the young woman burst into tears. "I'm afraid you'll get the wrong idea about me," she said between sobs. "I'm really not that kind of girl."

"I know, I know," he said soothingly.

"You're the first one," she whimpered.

"The first one to make love to you?"

"No," she replied. "The first one to believe me."

Bill walked into a bar and saw Bob sitting at the counter with a big smile on his face. "What are you so happy about?" he asked.

"Well, yesterday I was out waxing my boat," Bob said, "when a redhead came up to me—tits out to here, Bill. She says, 'Can I have a ride in your boat?' I said, 'Sure!' So I took her way out, turned off the engine and said, 'It's either screw or swim.' And she couldn't swim, Bill!"

A couple of days later, Bill walked into the bar and saw Bob crying over a beer. "Bob, what are you so sad about?"

"Well, Bill, today I was out waxing my boat when a gorgeous brunette came up to me—tits way out to here. She says, 'Can I have a ride in your boat?' 'Sure you can have a ride in my boat,' I say. So I took her way, way out. I turned off the engine and said, 'It's either screw or swim!' She pulled down her pants—and she had a dick, Bill! She had a great big dick! And, Bill, I can't swim!"

A woman picked up a few items in the supermarket, then headed for the express line. The clerk had his back turned to her, so she said, "Excuse me. I'm in a hurry. Could you check me out, please?"

The clerk turned, looked her up and down and said, "Nice tits."

PLAYBOY CLASSIC: A young secretary was describing her date to a friend. "After dinner," she said, "he wanted to come back to my apartment, but I refused. I told him my mother would worry if I did anything like that."

"Then what happened?"

"He kept insisting, and I kept refusing," the secretary said.

"He didn't weaken your resolve, did he?" the friend asked.

"Not one bit. In the end, we went to his apartment. I figured, let *his* mother worry."

A drunk stumbled upon a baptismal service by the river. "Son, are you ready to find Jesus?" the cleric asked.

"Yes, Preacher, I sure am."

The minister dunked the fellow under the water and pulled him back up. "Have you found Jesus?"

"No, I haven't," the drunk replied.

The preacher dunked him again, for a bit longer. "Now, brother, have you found Jesus?"

"No, not yet, Reverend."

The preacher held the man under for a full minute this time, then asked, "Have you found Jesus now?"

Gasping for air, the fellow blurted, "Are you sure this is where he fell in?"

THIS MONTH'S MOST FREQUENT SUBMISSION: A man walked into a psychiatrist's office wearing nothing but Saran Wrap. "Well," the shrink remarked, "I can clearly see your nuts!"

E-JOKE OF THE MONTH: A woman told her husband that she wanted to have surgery to enlarge her breasts. "You don't need surgery to do that," he said.

"I don't?"

"No. Just rub toilet paper between them."

"How does that make them bigger?"

"I don't know," he replied, "but it worked for your ass."

Send your jokes on postcards to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or by e-mail to jokes@playboy.com. $100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.*

"Would you say you strongly favor a tax break, somewhat favor it, or favor it not at all?"

Collection Treatment

(continued from page 96)

indecipherable greetings when they happened to meet someone.

Audra, too, was furtive by nature, but the elusiveness of the men made her perversely bold. She stared straight at them without speaking when she saw them in the halls, as if she knew something awful about them. Sometimes she left the door to her room half open, and the men would turn their heads as they passed, despite themselves, and then look away sharply when they saw her, as if they had been slapped.

Will Finn was not furtive. His steps on the way to the shower down the hall (he took two showers a day, before and after his run) were purposeful, unhurried and somehow distracted, Audra thought. On the day she met him, on his way back to his room after the second shower, she gave him an ominous, lingering look. Will stopped and introduced himself. He even reached out to shake her hand, though most of what he shook was sleeve. Audra's black sleeves extended down to the base of her thumbs.

"So, have you been here long?" Will rubbed his wet hair with a towel as he asked her this. He was wearing more formal clothes now, a buttondown shirt and dark trousers.

"Almost a month. I was staying in another place before, but they had bugs in the bathroom at night."

Will nodded. "This isn't a bad place. I mean, it could be worse."

"It can always be worse," Audra said. She was following him back to his room but lingered in the doorway until he gestured her inside. "I like it when they just take your money and don't ask you any questions. Not like when you're trying to rent an apartment or something, you know?"

Will froze momentarily in the act of hanging up his towel. He turned back to look at her, then nodded again, slowly this time. "I know what you mean. That's one of the advantages, with hotels."

Audra was taking in the room curiously. Will did have a TV, though he would later tell her he had bought it himself, at a garage sale, for $32. He also had a small, old-fashioned tape deck, which stood on the single table, surrounded by piles of neatly labeled cassettes. His bed was made, the white edge of the sheet tucked precisely over the thin brown cover, the way things are arranged in real hotels. A black suitcase lay open in the far corner, full of folded clothes.

"I've seen you running," Audra said conversationally.

"You must be an early riser, then."

Audra shrugged. "Do you do it to lose weight?"

"What?" He tilted his head slightly, uncomprehending.

"Running. Because it's not very effective, you know. There are a lot of better ways. Although you don't look like you need to lose weight." Appearances could be misleading, Audra knew.

"I don't run to lose weight." Will looked baffled, as if running and losing weight were two unlinkable concepts.

"Then what for?"

"I——well, mainly because it makes me feel good. While I'm doing it, and after I'm done. And also because it's a habit, I guess. I've been doing it for . . . for a while. It connects me with myself. The way I am now with the way I used to be." He smiled, but the smile was surprisingly joyless. "I never thought about it like that. But I guess that's it."

"And that's a good thing? Being connected with the way you used to be?"

Once again, Will faltered. He looked up from tying his shoes as if he had suddenly forgotten what shoes were. "I guess it must be," he said softly. "I mean, I'm doing it, right?"

Since he seemed to be expecting an answer, Audra nodded. "Right. I've seen you do it."

"Anyway, it's probably a good idea." He ran his hand through his hair in a brisk, practical gesture. "With the job I have now, I don't get much exercise. I work in a store," he said, before she could ask. "Stereo equipment."

"What did you do before that?"

Will Finn shook his head as if he did not intend to answer, but then did. "Counselor. At a high school. I used to go out with the kids on field days sometimes. So I could count on some exercise every once in a while. What do you do?" he asked quickly.

"I don't work," Audra said.

"You're looking for a job?"

"Not really."

Three weeks after she had arrived in the city, Audra wrote to her parents, describing what she would be forced to do in order to support herself when she ran out of money. By then, she had seen enough to be quite detailed. The money—not a lot, but enough—had been arriving steadily ever since.

"You're an artist, then," Will said.

Audra considered this briefly. "Something like that, I guess."

Will nodded, satisfied. "Lots of artists here. Artists and crazy people."

"What's the difference?" Audra asked.

Will seemed to think she was joking. He smiled, but Audra did not smile back at him.

•

If she was an artist, her art was not very time-consuming. It left her with plenty of leisure and Audra took to spending part of it in the lobby of the Aurora Hotel. Surprisingly, the Aurora did have a lobby. Its windows were slightly below ground level, and consequently, it was in a constant state of dim wintry light. The lobby included one frayed orange couch, three greenish armchairs, a coffee table, a large TV and a candy machine whose slot was jammed with some kind of metal chip someone had tried to pass off as a quarter.

Sophia Croff treated the lobby as her own private living room. At first, she had glared at Audra every time she found her settled into the armchair in the corner, watching whatever station the TV had been tuned to. But Audra merely stared back blankly, and after a while, Sophia took to ignoring her, and after that, she seemed to genuinely forget that Audra was there. Most of Sophia's guests followed her lead. It was not hard to ignore Audra. She did not fidget, she wore dark clothing and she usually did not interfere in other people's conversations.

All of Sophia's visitors were men, which made Audra remember something her mother had told her long ago: Never trust a woman with no female friends. The words had stuck in Audra's mind, though unreserved trust was not one of her problems.

Most of the men would visit the lobby either as a prelude or as an epilog to their visits to Sophia's room on the fourth floor. The talk, in either case, was not very stimulating, as far as Audra was concerned. The preludes talked mainly in monosyllables. The epilogs mainly grunted. Sophia complained about the residents, her maintenance man, high expenses and low profits and the endless work of running a hotel. Audra had heard it all before.

The most interesting visitor was a man Sophia called Vic, with a sharp, raspy sound, like a match being lit. Vic reminded Audra of an evil cowboy, dyed, slicked and leathered in black. Audra had never seen him go up to Sophia's room. Although sex seemed to play some role in their relationship, the role was not obvious. Money also played some part in it, as did knowledge. The two of them often talked about what they knew.

"I know how you got that table," Vic said softly when Sophia told him to take his boots off it, not budging. "And the sofa. And the television. And this place." He gestured inclusively with the red burning tip of the cigarette he held.

Sophia snorted. "You know. You know. And I knew how old they were, your little friends. But I gave you a room anyway."

Then they both laughed, Sophia

(continued on page 162)

Playboy's Pigskin Preview

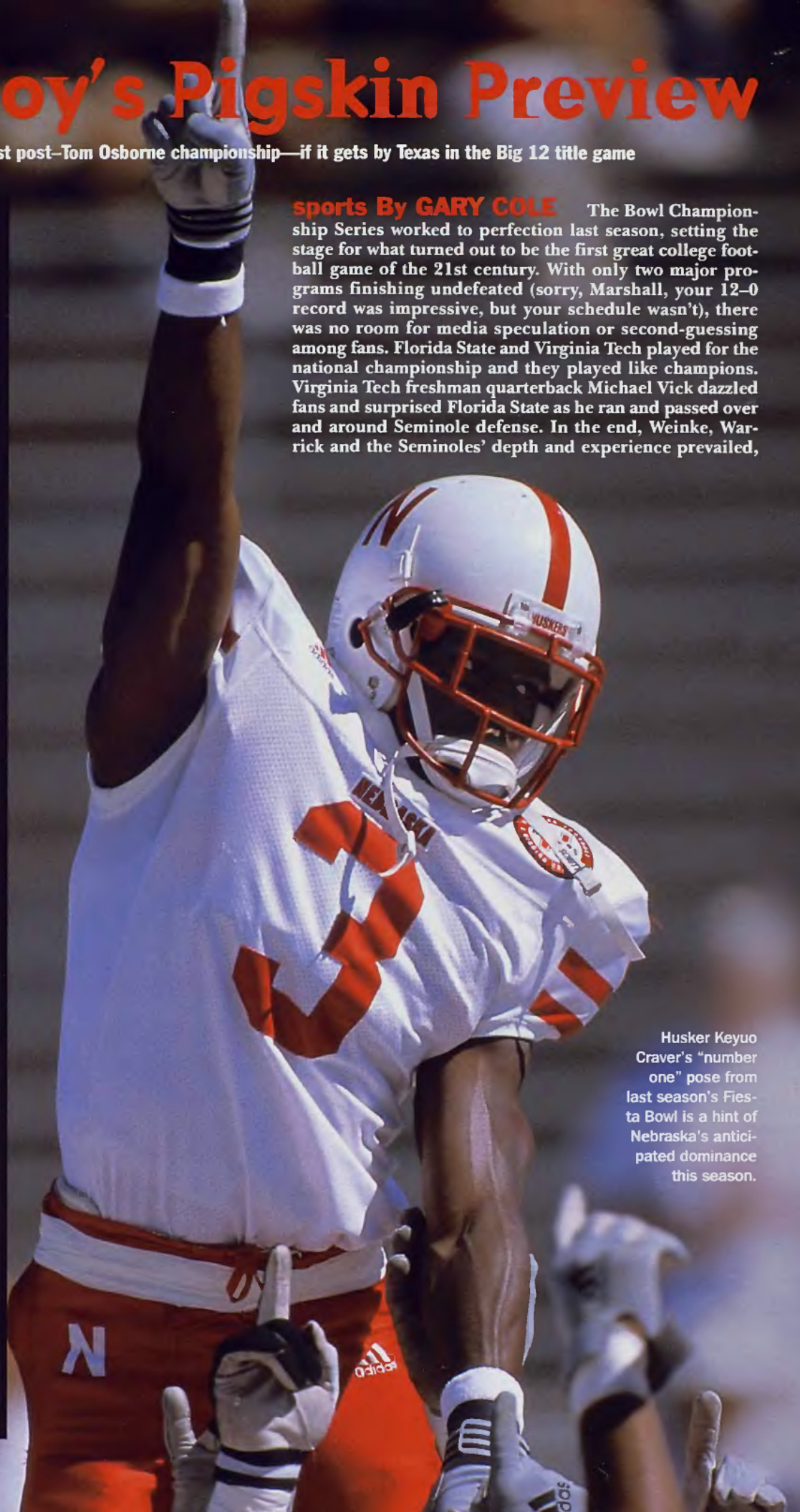
Nebraska could win its first post–Tom Osborne championship—if it gets by Texas in the Big 12 title game

TOP 20 TEAMS

1. NEBRASKA 11–0
2. FLORIDA STATE 11–1
3. ALABAMA 10–1
4. TEXAS 10–1
5. MIAMI 9–2
6. MICHIGAN 9–2
7. GEORGIA 9–2
8. CLEMSON 9–2
9. WISCONSIN 9–3
10. VIRGINIA TECH 9–3
11. USC 9–3
12. KANSAS STATE 9–3
13. FLORIDA 8–3
14. MISSISSIPPI STATE .. 8–3
15. WASHINGTON 8–3
16. ILLINOIS 8–3
17. TENNESSEE 7–4
18. TEXAS A&M 7–4
19. PENN STATE 8–4
20. TEXAS CHRISTIAN ..11–0

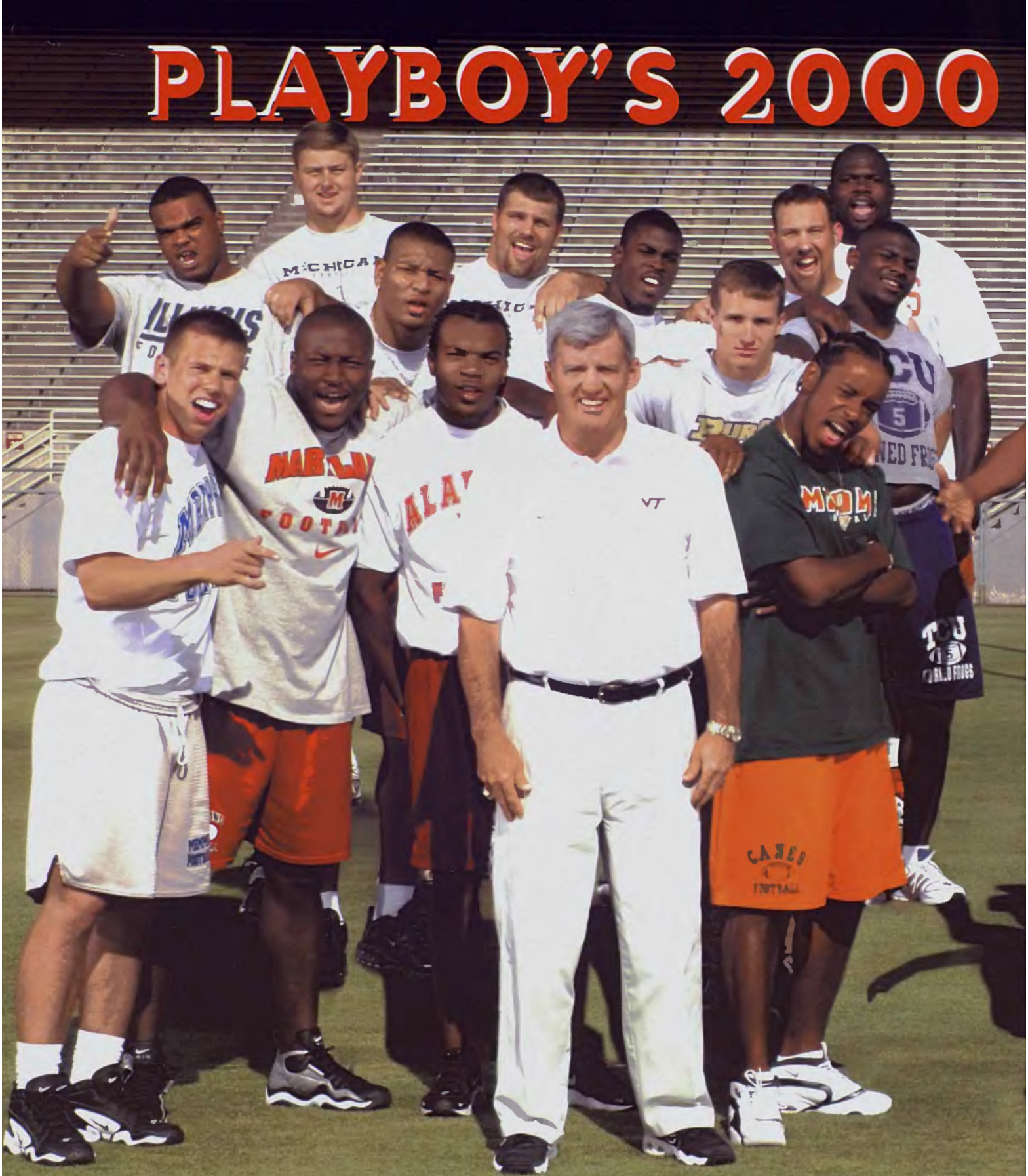
Possible breakthroughs: Ohio State (7–4); Oklahoma (7–4); Boston College (7–4); Arizona (7–4); Stanford (7–4); Arizona State (7–4); Mississippi (7–4); Minnesota (7–4); Colorado State (7–4); Colorado (6–5); Brigham Young (7–5)

sports By GARY COLE The Bowl Championship Series worked to perfection last season, setting the stage for what turned out to be the first great college football game of the 21st century. With only two major programs finishing undefeated (sorry, Marshall, your 12–0 record was impressive, but your schedule wasn't), there was no room for media speculation or second-guessing among fans. Florida State and Virginia Tech played for the national championship and they played like champions. Virginia Tech freshman quarterback Michael Vick dazzled fans and surprised Florida State as he ran and passed over and around Seminole defense. In the end, Weinke, Warrick and the Seminoles' depth and experience prevailed,



Husker Keyuo Craver's "number one" pose from last season's Fiesta Bowl is a hint of Nebraska's anticipated dominance this season.

PLAYBOY'S 2000

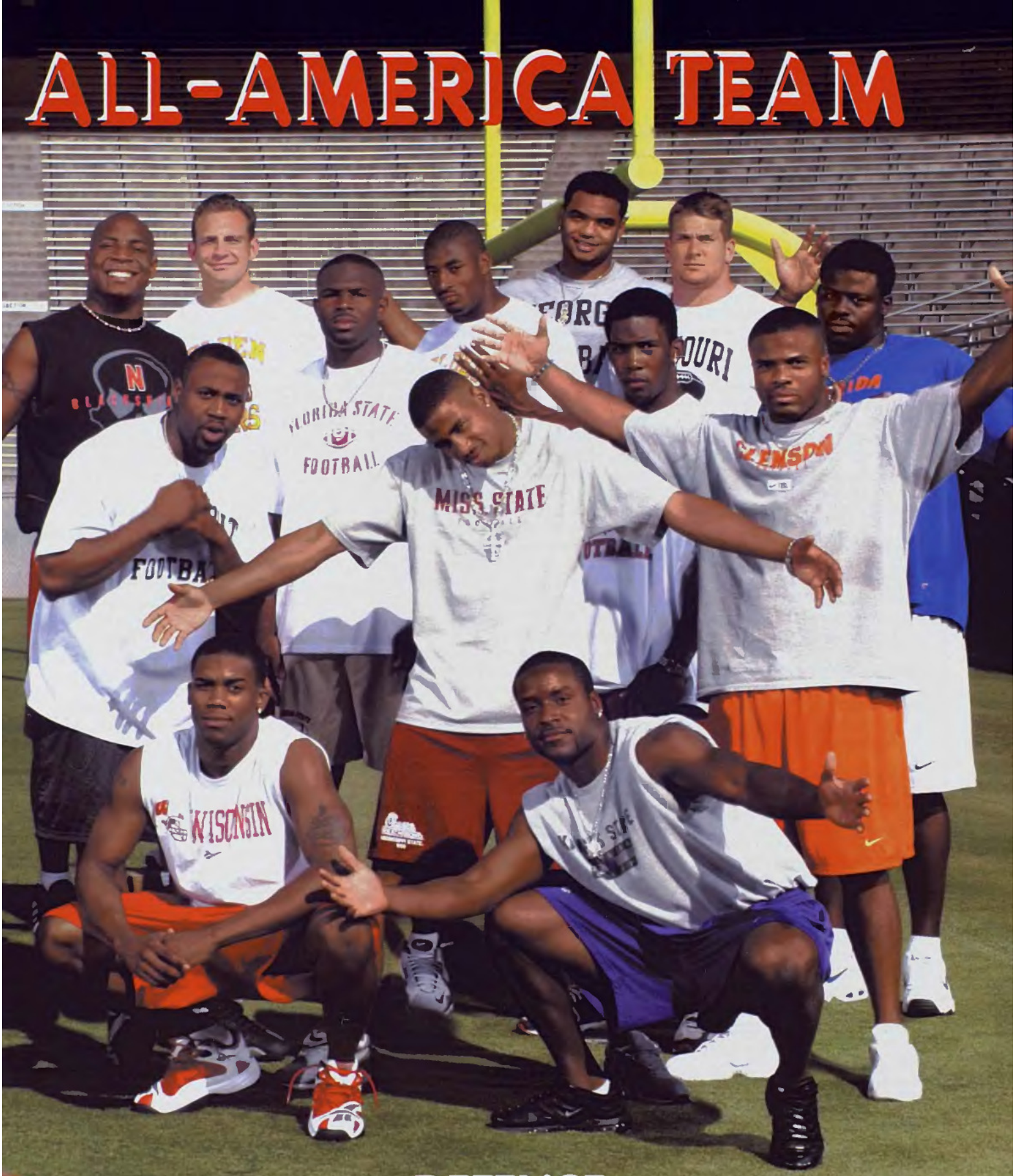


OFFENSE

Left to right, top row: Marques Sullivan, lineman, Illinois; Jeff Backus, lineman, Michigan; Deuce McAllister, running back, Mississippi; Steve Hutchinson, lineman, Michigan; Michael Vick, quarterback, Virginia Tech; Drew Brees, Anson Mount Scholar/Athlete, Purdue; Casey Rabach, center, Wisconsin; Leonard Davis, lineman, Texas; LaDainian Tomlinson, running back, Texas Christian. Bottom row: Ryan White, placekicker, Memphis; LaMont Jordan, running back, Maryland; Freddie Milons, wide receiver, Alabama; Frank Beamer, Coach of the Year, Virginia Tech; Santana Moss, wide receiver, Miami.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD IZUI

ALL-AMERICA TEAM



DEFENSE

Left to right, top row: Carlos Polk, linebacker, Nebraska; Nick Harris, punter, California; Derrick Gibson, defensive back, Florida State; Andre Carter, lineman, California; Richard Seymour, lineman, Georgia; Justin Smith, lineman, Missouri; Alex Brown, lineman, Florida. Middle row: Jamie Winborn, linebacker, Vanderbilt; Fred Smoot, defensive back, Mississippi State; Saleem Rasheed, linebacker, Alabama; Robert Carswell, defensive back, Clemson. Bottom: Jamar Fletcher, defensive back, Wisconsin; David Allen, kick returner, Kansas State.

ACCOMMODATIONS PROVIDED BY THE POINTE HILTON RESORT AT TAPATIO CLIFFS, PHOENIX, ARIZONA

THE PLAYBOY ALL-AMERICAS

PLAYBOY's College Football Coach of the Year for 2000 is FRANK BEAMER of Virginia Tech. Beamer has transformed a mediocre program into a national power, leading the Hokies to seven consecutive winning seasons and seven bowl games, plus two outright Big East championships and a share of a third. The Hokies' only loss last season was to Florida State in an epic battle for the national championship.

OFFENSE

MICHAEL VICK—Quarterback, 6'1", 212 pounds, sophomore, Virginia Tech. Led Division I-A in passing efficiency and led the Big East in total offense with 2425 yards.

DEUCE MCALLISTER—Running back, 6'1", 220, senior, Mississippi. Already holds school all-purpose yards record with 3401.

LADAINIAN TOMLINSON—Running back, 5'11", 217, senior, Texas Christian. Led the NCAA in rushing last season with 1850 yards.

LAMONT JORDAN—Running back, 5'11", 216, senior, Maryland. Led the nation in rushing over final six games of 1999 season, averaging 183.5 yards per game. Scored 17 touchdowns.

SANTANA MOSS—Wide receiver, 5'10", 175, senior, Miami. Led team with 54 receptions and 899 receiving yards. Also returned 33 punts for 467.

FREDDIE MILONS—Wide receiver, 5'11", 183, junior, Alabama. Set school all-time single-season reception record last year with 65 catches for 733 yards and two touchdowns.

CASEY RABACH—Center, 6'5", 291, senior, Wisconsin. A three-year starter, he was part of Badger offensive line that led the Big 10 twice in rushing.

STEVE HUTCHINSON—Lineman, 6'5", 298, senior, Michigan. A two-time Playboy All-America and a three-time All Big 10 first-team selection.

JEFF BACKUS—Lineman, 6'6", 298, senior, Michigan. Another three-time All Big 10 selection, he's made 37 consecutive starts at left tackle.

MARQUES SULLIVAN—Lineman, 6'5", 310, senior, Illinois. Started 34 consecutive games, has 51 knockdown blocks and was part of Illini line that held four Big 10 opponents sackless against his team last season.

LEONARD DAVIS—Lineman, 6'6", 367, Texas. Nicknamed the Dancing Bear, he was the biggest lineman in the Big 12 last season.

RYAN WHITE—Placekicker, 5'10", 190, junior, Memphis. A finalist for Lou Groza Award as best kicker the past two seasons.

DAVID ALLEN—Kick returner, 5'9", 200, senior, Kansas State. Has already tied the NCAA record for TDs on punt returns with seven.

DEFENSE

ALEX BROWN—Lineman, 6'4", 265, junior, Florida. Only the third sophomore in school history to be named first-team All-America. Set single-season school record for sacks with 13.

RICHARD SEYMOUR—Lineman, 6'6", 300, senior, Georgia. Led his team in tackles with 74 and tackles-for-losses with 10.

JUSTIN SMITH—Lineman, 6'5", 265, junior, Missouri. Tied school's single-season sack record with eight and had 92 tackles last season. Already has 178 tackles in two seasons.

ANDRE CARTER—Lineman, 6'5", 265, senior, California. Recorded 53 tackles last season, 20 of which were behind the line of scrimmage. Tied for third in Pac 10 with 10 sacks.

SALEEM RASHEED—Linebacker, 6'3", 220, sophomore, Alabama. A 13-game starter last season as a freshman, he registered 84 tackles with eight tackles-for-losses. SEC freshman defensive player of the year.

JAMIE WINBORN—Linebacker, 6'0", 232, junior, Vanderbilt. Has led the SEC in tackles for two consecutive years with a combined total of 272, including 38 tackles-for-losses and 13 sacks.

CARLOS POLK—Linebacker, 6'2", 250, senior, Nebraska. Part of Nebraska defense that allowed opponents an average of 77.1 yards rushing per game last season.

JAMAR FLETCHER—Defensive back, 5'10", 171, junior, Wisconsin. Broke the Big 10 record for career interceptions returned for TDs in just 19 games.

FRED SMOOT—Defensive back, 6'1", 173, senior, Mississippi State. Sixth on school's all-time interception list. Had 57 tackles last season.

DERRICK GIBSON—Defensive back, 6'2", 207, senior, Florida State. Tied for team lead with four interceptions last season.

ROBERT CARSWELL—Defensive back, 6'0", 210, senior, Clemson. Set school record last season with 129 tackles. Also had six interceptions.

NICK HARRIS—Punter, 6'3", 220, senior, California. Averaged 44.65 yards per punt last season. Had a punt of at least 47 yards in all 33 games of career. Last year had 29 punts over 50 yards and six over 60.

and FSU won the game 46–29.

Proponents of the BCS formula for ranking teams were elated. Advocates of a playoff system were briefly silenced. But what if Nebraska had scored one more touchdown against Texas and finished 12–0? Or suppose Clemson had pulled an upset by scoring one more time against FSU, and that Michael Vick had not snatched victory from defeat against West Virginia? That scenario would have left no school undefeated and would have added Kansas State to a four-way traffic jam of teams with one loss.

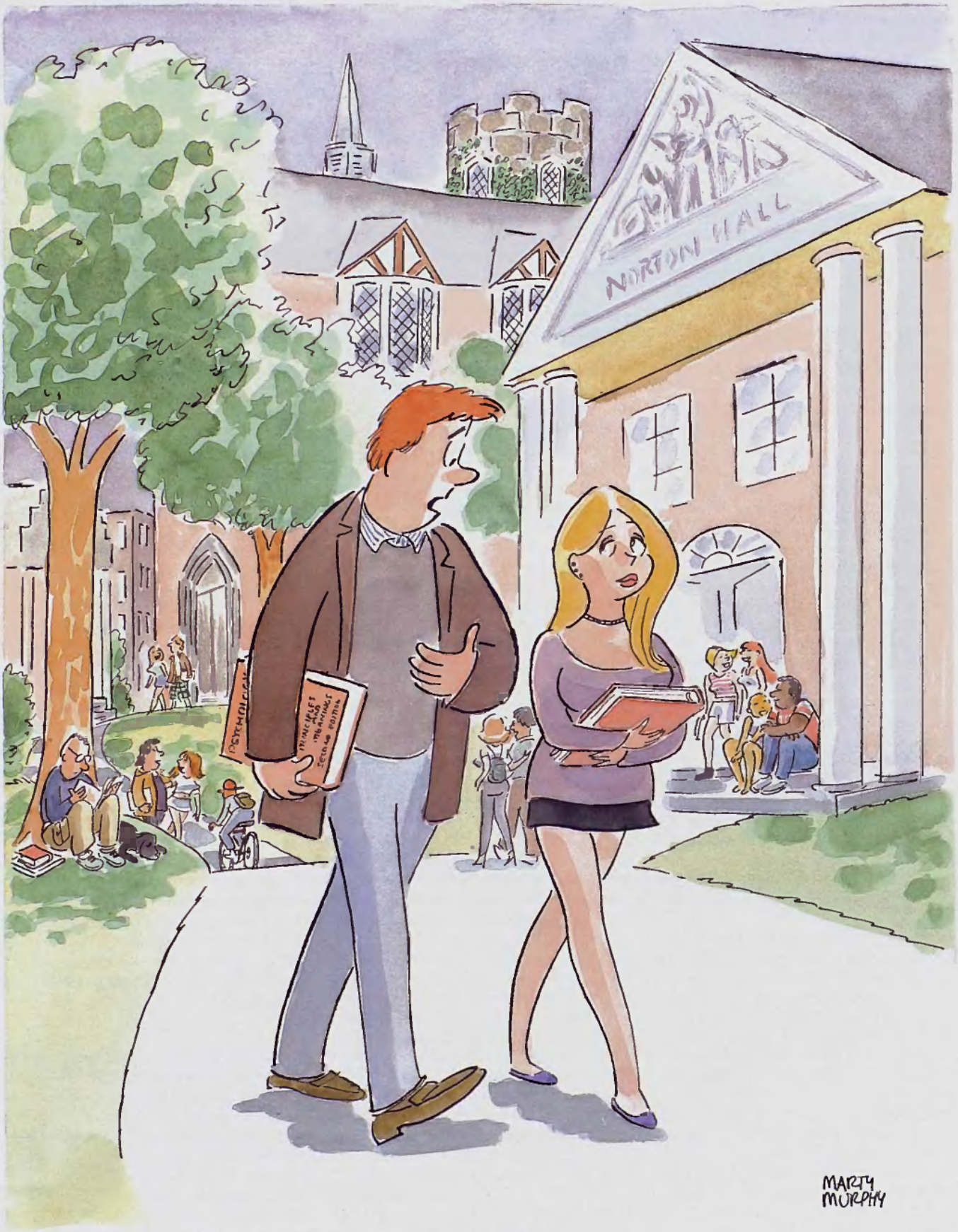
As satisfying as the Sugar Bowl turned out to be, Division I college football still needs a championship playoff system that uses the major bowls as part of the elimination process. Critics argue that the minor bowls would suffer. But how do you hurt the Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl or the Micron/PC Bowl? Schools will continue to be invited. Diehard fans and no one else will attend. The bowl system will survive because of title sponsorship and a television market that still has more channels than games.

Incredibly, the NCAA will add two new bowl games for the 2000–2001 season: the Silicon Valley Classic in San Jose and the—we're not kidding—Galleryfurniture.com Bowl in Houston. That adds up to 25 bowl games. With a total of 107 1A football schools, there's nearly a 50 percent chance your team will play in a bowl this year. And there are two additional bowls (Hoosier and Freedom) under consideration. Maybe it wouldn't be so bad if a few died off.

BCS or playoffs, the fever for college football shows no sign of abating. Attendance is up despite the incredible number of televised games. Tailgating and face painting are rampant. College football, one of America's great cottage industries, flourishes. Let's put the ball on the tee and get started.

(1) NEBRASKA

They're back! Those of you who thought that Tom Osborne's retirement meant the end of Husker dominance should think again. After finishing 12–1 last season, third-year coach Frank Solich returns what should be the most dominating offense in college football. Quarterback Eric Crouch, who passed for 1269 yards and rushed for another 889, is the most talented option quarterback in the nation. Four I-backs, who combined for more than 2000 rushing yards last year, will take turns running behind an unusually quick and strong offensive line, even measured by Husker standards. And Bobby Newcombe, who Solich shrewdly switched from quarterback to wingback and return man last season, is a threat every time he touches the ball.



"You wouldn't say I have no intellectual curiosity if you knew the hours I've spent pondering how to get in your pants. . . ."

The defense is less proven but still stacked with blue-chippers, including Playboy All-America linebacker Carlos Polk and rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch. The regular season schedule is surmountable, and unless Nebraska stumbles in the Big 12 championship game, the Huskers have a shot at bringing another national championship trophy home to Lincoln. 11–0

(2) FLORIDA STATE

A smile of relief washed over the face of Bobby Bowden as he walked off the field, the Seminoles having finally put away a stubborn Virginia Tech team. "You always need a little luck somewhere along the way," Bowden said, reflecting upon the fact that FSU has finished in AP's top four for 13 consecutive years but had only one other national championship ring to show for it. The 70-year-old coach brushed off questions about retirement and immediately began the job of motivating his team for the next year. "Only one team gets a chance to defend a national championship," he said. With quarterback Chris Weinke's decision to return for his senior season, Bowden knows FSU has a real chance to repeat. Running back Travis Minor returns, as does much of the offensive line.

No one can replace explosive Peter Warrick, though Bowden has a stable of talented players eager to try. The biggest challenge for the Seminoles will be replacing interior linemen Corey Simon and Jerry Johnson. All three starting linebackers return, and there are Tay Cody and Playboy All-America Derrick Gibson in the defensive backfield. No one's likely to topple the Seminoles, but since it's difficult to go one season without a loss, let alone two, count on at least one upset. 11–1

(3) ALABAMA

Oh, what a difference a 10-win season can make. Coach Mike DuBose looked like a burned biscuit after Alabama agreed to settle a sexual harassment allegation against him. What's more, DuBose couldn't seem to emerge from the successful shadow of predecessor Gene Stallings. But while DuBose suffered a public relations fiasco, he managed to recruit some awesome football talent. Bama was a force to be reckoned with last season, posting 10 wins that would have been 11 had they not allowed an Orange Bowl victory to slip through their fingers in a 35–34 overtime loss to Michigan. Shaun Alexander graduated, leaving a big hole to fill at running back, but Shaun Bohanon and redshirt Brando Miree (an Alexander clone) are eager to claim his spot. Quarterback Andrew Zow has an excellent offensive line to operate behind, and multipurpose offensive threat Freddie Milons, a Playboy All-America, is a receiver. The defense, led by sophomore linebacker and Playboy All-America Saleem Rasheed and lineman Kenny King, will dominate. A brutal schedule will test whether Alabama belongs in this year's BCS championship game. 10–1

(4) TEXAS

Mack Brown has wasted little time getting Texas football back on track. The Longhorns posted nine wins in each of Brown's first two seasons, and he continues to load his roster with talent, landing a third straight blue-chip recruiting class and instilling in his players confidence and a competitive spirit. However, Brown's formula for bringing a national championship to Austin is still missing some key ingredients. He has an awesome array of talent returning on the defensive side, including tackles Casey Hampton and Shaun Rogers. Defensive sack masters Aaron Humphrey and Cedric Woodard have graduated, and Brown will fill one of those spots with sophomore Cory Redding. On offense, it appears that Chris Simms, son of former New York Giants great Phil Simms, has beaten out Major Applewhite, who underwent off-season ACL surgery, for the starting quarterback spot. Kwame Cavil, UT's superlative receiver from last season, opted early for the NFL, so Simms will pass to Montrell Flowers and a group of talented but untried freshmen. Brown's rebuilding strategy is sound but requires a little more time and luck. 10–1

(5) MIAMI

Coming off a 9–4 record last season and with 39 players returning from their Gator Bowl depth chart, Miami is poised to reclaim the dominating position it held during the coaching eras of Jimmy Johnson and Dennis Erickson. However, under the quiet but controlling hand of coach Butch Davis, there's been less room for swagger and a lower profile for Miami's best players. Sophomore Ken Dorsey will take the quarterback reins from Kenny Kelly, who left Miami in February to pursue a career in pro baseball. Dorsey was impressive in three starts last season, completing 64 of 91 attempts for 718 yards and nine touchdowns. The Canes are loaded at running back, with senior James Jackson, Najeh Davenport (back from ACL surgery) and sophomores Clinton Portis and Jarrett Payton, son of NFL legend Walter. There's a host of talented receivers as well, but none better or faster than Playboy All-America Santana Moss. Linebacker Dan Morgan is good enough to make Miami fans forget that All-America Nate Webster took an early leave for the NFL. Miami's secondary, featuring Al Blades (brother of NFLers Brian and Bennie), is one of the best in the nation. 9–2

(6) MICHIGAN

With Tom Brady graduated, overheralded and underplayed Drew Henson finally gets to be the number one man at quarterback for coach Lloyd Carr and the Wolverines. Henson will have plenty of help on offense. Playboy All-Americas Steve Hutchinson and Jeff Backus are the nucleus of an outstanding offensive line. Running back Anthony Thomas resisted the call of the NFL to get his degree and play his senior season in Ann Arbor. Wide receiver David Terrell elicits comparisons to Charles Woodson, not only because of his athletic ability but because he has the versatility to also play in the defensive secondary. The Wolverines return six starters from a defense that was less than dominating last season. Carr is hoping some of the freshmen who redshirted last year will have an impact this year. If they do, Michigan has a shot at a double-digit victory total. 9–2

(7) GEORGIA

With multithreat quarterback Quincy Carter returning along with seven other starters from last year's offense, Georgia is certain to put lots of points on the scoreboard (the Bulldogs averaged 28 ppg last season). Four freshman All-Americas on the offensive side should be even better as sophomores. Four-year head coach Jim Donnan anointed former Oklahoma coach Gary Gibbs with instructions to shore up a sometimes leaky defense. Gibbs will have Playboy All-America tackle Richard Seymour to build around. Marcus Stroud, who plays next to Seymour inside, is just as big (300 pounds) and nearly as good. Expectations are high in Athens that the Dogs will play in the SEC championship game this coming year. 9–2

(8) CLEMSON

Tommy Bowden had a near-perfect season in his first year as head coach at Clemson. The Tigers won half their games (6–6), a four-victory improvement against Division I opponents over the previous year. Bowden reestablished a winning attitude in Death Valley and sucked up many of the best in-state recruits. As good a son as he is a coach, he didn't make the mistake of beating his daddy's Seminoles on their way to another national championship, though the Tigers gave Florida State some anxious moments in a 17–14 nail-biter. Now Tommy has to build a one-year

(continued on page 152)

TOON IN!

presenting the Winners of Playboy's first-ever Comix & Animation Contest

Submit! That was the word we put out in January. We promised a $25,000 grand prize and 10 honorable mentions, plus appearances on Playboy's website and in PLAYBOY magazine. Six months later we had more than 1000 submissions, in every multimedia format and from nearly every demographic: neophytes and vets, Canadians and Spaniards, Koreans and Russians, graphic artists and web animators. The grand prize went to Charles O. Austen and Chris Moeller of Film Roman for *Tripping the Rift* (left). A multithreat talent, Austen worked on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and spent two seasons as storyboard artist for *King of the Hill*. Moeller started out in clay-animated films and worked on *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*. Referring to their erotically charged parody, judge Kevin Smith said, "This is how the PLAYBOY cartoons of old were meant to evolve." Here's to evolution.

GRAND PRIZE WINNER
Tripping the Rift
by Film Roman, Inc.

To view the Winners, log on to playboy.com

CELEBRITY JUDGES

Judges for the historic contest included PLAYBOY's longtime Cartoon Editor, Michelle Urry (who also ran the contest), and Playboy.com Creative Director Jay Boersma. In addition, we tapped three prestigious figures in the field of cartoon humor and animation: Scott Adams, the award-winning creator of *Dilbert*; Kevin Smith, the filmmaker behind *Chasing Amy*, *Dogma* and *Clerks*; and Gahan Wilson, the cartoonist whose monsters and macabre humor have enlivened PLAYBOY for decades. Wilson summed up his chore: "I was delighted to encourage some subversive and dangerously perceptive new talents."

CONANETTE by Dean Yeagle
The veteran Yeagle has worked for Disney and Warner Bros. and has done memorable ad work. Of *Conanette*, Smith noted, "It evokes those naughty-but-nice one-pagers that helped define PLAYBOY for almost five decades."

PERFECT 10 by Erik Barclay
Barclay, the youngest winner, still in art school, concocted the story of a fantasy woman "who can slap you around in German," says Urry. "It's cute, original and very sexy."

BIG FUN SHOW by Brett Bagenstose
There's a crisis on Paradise Island. Who will fill the empty quiz show spot? Superfly? Jesus of Nazareth? This animation grew out of Bagenstose's comedy troupe, the Recliners, a 1993 Cable Ace award winner. His work has been shown at festivals worldwide.

SEXXXY DOLL by Edgar Beals
Beals, a Canadian, was inspired by the website Real Doll, which sells life-size female dolls. Once the plot was complete, it took three weeks to finalize the backgrounds, characters and sound.

THE KIDS
by Jorge Gomez and Juan Alvarez
Residents of Spain; Juan worked for Hanna-Barbera and did the pencils, Jorge is in comics and did the color. The "kids'" joke here? They're each married—to other people. "Twisty and sexy," says Urry.

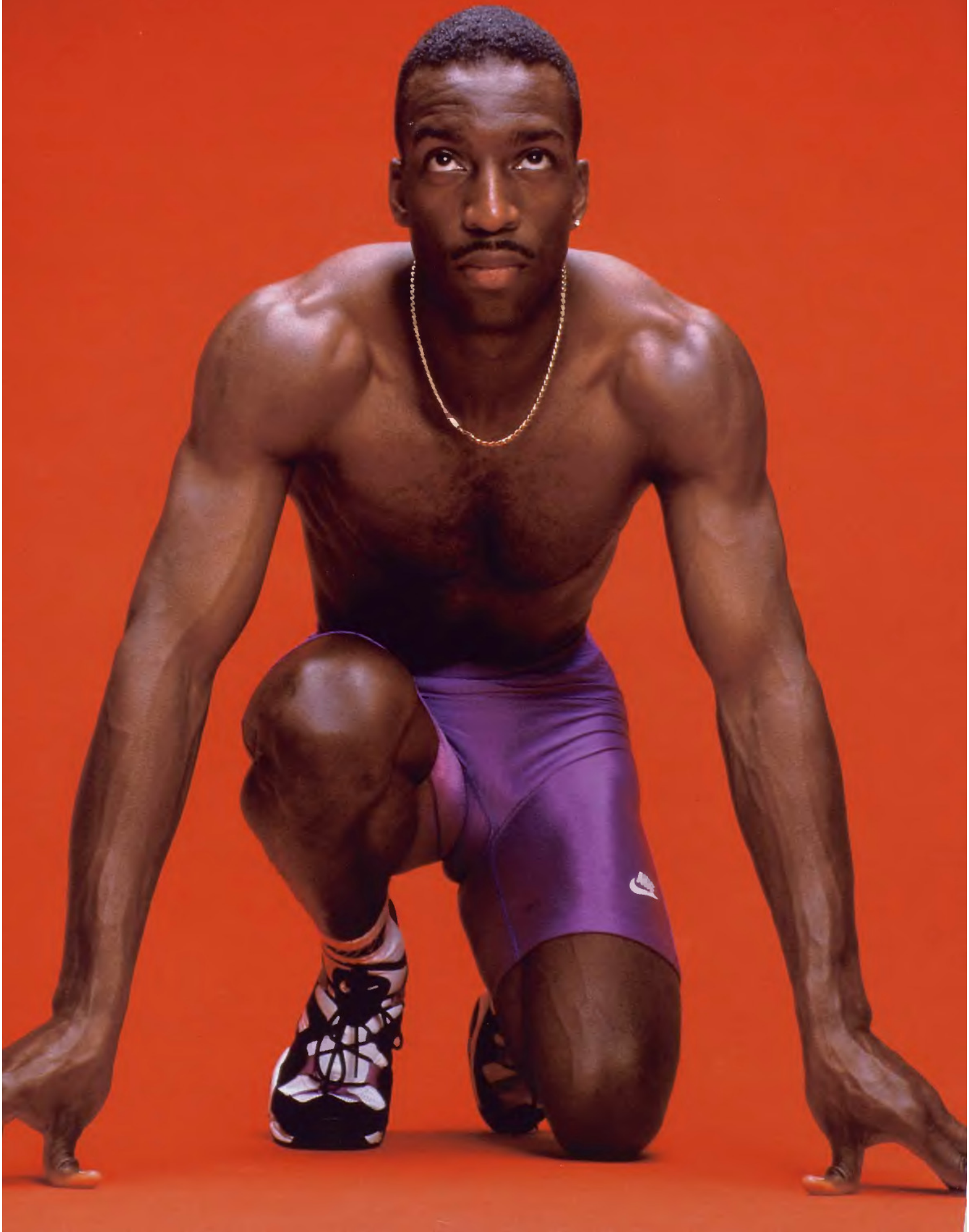
MATILDA
by Patricia Beckmann
This Russian shit-kicker is the baby of Beckmann, a versatile talent who comes from a distinguished family of artists. She did the voices and animation herself.

HAIRBALLS
by Mr. Lawrence for Film Roman
Two cats fret about their sexuality and behavior toward mice. Mr. Lawrence, who has worked on *The Ren and Stimpy Show*, is now at Nickelodeon.

HECTOR THE FRUIT BAT IN THE BIG CITY
by Aaron Ber, with Rupinder Malhotra, Mike Massoom and Adam Saunders
An arrogant fruit bat is doomed to life in a big-city sewer—taunted by homophobic rats. The voices and an original score add to the eerie, haunting quality.

THE STAN AND STAN BIG SPORTS SPECTACULAR EXTRAVAGANZA
by Michael Krogmann, Max Hackett and Dan Hoisman
Skewed lunacy from two crude sports anchors. The show was created by SportsPage.com, a trio of young men in Los Angeles. "Irreverent and quirky," says Urry.

RUBBER CHICKEN by John Bloom and David M. Woodson
Cited for its great voices and skillful art, it's an ingenious spin on Forties and Fifties animation. This flexible pullet works with a stand-up comedian and does porn movies on the side.



Michael Johnson

america's track star is neat, smart, mellow and preparing one more olympic surprise

British runner Roger Black said that when you run against Michael Johnson, you run for the silver medal. Since 1990, Johnson has been one of the most dominant runners in the history of track and field. He has won 90 percent of his races, three Olympic gold medals and a record nine gold medals in the world championships. He once went eight years and 58 races between losses in the 400 meters.

Johnson's career has always been about doing things no one else has done. He was the first man ranked number one in the world in the 200 and 400, and he has done it five times. In 1993, he became the first man ever to win two different running events in the world championship. Two years later, he became the first to win the 200 and the 400 in the same world championship. In 1996, he became the first man to win those two events in the Olympics.

He also is the fastest ever to run the 200 and the 400. In 1996, he broke the 200-meter world record twice. At the Olympics, his time of 19.32 seconds took 0.34 off his own record. It was a staggering margin. Not since 1936 had anyone broken the 200 record by as much as three tenths of a second, and then it was Jesse Owens, the only athlete Johnson has ever idolized.

Last summer in Seville, Johnson added the 400-meter world record (43.18 seconds) to his résumé. Trailing behind were Sanderlei Parrela of Brazil and Alejandro Cardenas of Mexico, who set national records for their countries. But the closest of them, Parrela, was still 1.11 seconds behind Johnson, the widest margin ever in a world championship or Olympic final.

An injury in July prevented him from qualifying for the 200-meter Olympic event, but he'll try to win the 400 in back-to-back Olympics, then add another gold in the relay. By then he'll be 33 years old.

Johnson is one of the highest-paid athletes in track and field. After the 1996 Olympics, he signed a six-year contract with Nike that pays him an average of $2 million a year. He also commands a six-figure appearance fee for his races in Europe.

Ken Stephens has followed Johnson's career since 1989 and has seen him race more than 70 times in places such as Waco, Texas (Johnson's training base), Japan, Spain, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Atlanta. Stephens interviewed Johnson in the runner's north Dallas home. "His proudest possession isn't his magnificent gated home or one of his many gold medals or other awards. It is his first child, Sebastian, to whom his wife, Kerry, had given birth just six days earlier."

1

PLAYBOY: Most kids in the U.S. who want to be professional athletes probably think of football, basketball or baseball. You went a different way. Why?

JOHNSON: I tried football. Hated it. Football is a completely different mentality, from coaching all the way down. You know, the coaches yelling at you, trying to get you fired up. I didn't like that at all. When I first started playing sports, I just loved competing. I always liked individual sports better. I can remember playing on my junior high school teams, and I wasn't bad. I remember having a really good game, but we still lost. And I didn't like that at all. In individual sports, I liked winning and knowing that if I go out and have a good day today, I'll go home a winner. And, to be completely honest, I didn't like the contact of football. I didn't like getting hit and hitting.

2

PLAYBOY: Track has made you wealthy. But are you ever envious of the astronomical salaries paid in basketball and baseball?

JOHNSON: I never get envious because I look at it from two perspectives. One, I compare myself with other track athletes, and I do so much better than most of them. It's rare that track athletes have multimillion-dollar endorsement deals and make hundreds of thousands of dollars in appearance fees. So I feel fortunate to be able to do that, because this is the sport I'm in. I could look at it and say I'm the best track athlete in the world and Michael Jordan is the best basketball player in the world and he has a $30 million contract and I'm sitting here on a few-million-dollar contract. I could look at it like that, but I choose not to. I'm pleased with what I've got. The greatest synchronized swimmer in the world still has to have a job. The greatest gymnast in the world is still being supported by the Olympic committee. So it's all relative. But I'm comfortable and I feel fortunate to have what I have.

3

PLAYBOY: Your 200-meter world record was unlike anything in the Olympics since Bob Beamon broke the long-jump record by nearly two feet in Mexico City. What were the unique circumstances that night in Atlanta?

JOHNSON: I have always thought that breaking a world record is a bunch of factors coming together at the right time. That particular night it had to be what was at stake: an Olympic gold medal. It was my chance to make history by becoming the first man to win the 200 and the 400 in the Olympics. It was also that the Olympic Games were here in the U.S. It was a mostly American crowd cheering me on. And it was great competition. Two races before the Olympics, I got beat by Frankie Fredericks. It was all those things, and good weather.

4

PLAYBOY: Do you think your 200-meter world record is breakable?

JOHNSON: Yeah, I think that it is. It wasn't the perfect race, but I realize that it would be difficult to break. Those factors aren't going to come together

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL O'NEILL

again in my career. I'm not going to run another Olympic Games in the U.S. There isn't going to be another chance to make history by winning the 200 when I've already won the 400. And my focus isn't there, either. Breaking the 200-meter world record isn't something I'm aiming for. That's not on my wish list. But breaking 43 seconds in the 400 certainly is.

5

PLAYBOY: Is there anybody today who could break that 200 record?
JOHNSON: No. There's not a 200-meter runner out there who can run within three tenths of a second of that record.

6

PLAYBOY: In the 400, 43.18 is your record. You're talking about putting it in the 42s. What's magic about 42?
JOHNSON: The idea is to further show my dominance in the two events I run by breaking the 400-meter record by so much that nobody's going to run that for decades. Some people think it's already there—they don't count Butch Reynolds' record because of the drug suspension. But it was still standing there, so I honored it. A lot of people look at my time and say I've taken the record all the way from Lee Evans' 43.86 to 43.18. But I look at it as if I took it from Butch's 43.29 to 43.18, and I know I can do better than that.

With a world record, you get into changing the hundredths, changing the tenths. But when you're dropping a whole second, from 43, to 42, that's really doing something.

7

PLAYBOY: How do you typically get ready for a race? We've heard, for instance, that when Kerry is traveling with you she has to get another hotel room that day.
JOHNSON: Yeah, because I'm used to focusing, and she doesn't want to be around to distract me. She would just go out and stay out all day, and I was like, "You don't need to do that." I don't want her to feel like she can't come back to the room. But typically on race day I try to sleep. I try to stay up late the night before so I can sleep in pretty late. Because I don't usually race until the evening, I want to sleep late so that I can pass as much of the time as possible. Once I wake up, I'm anxious. I'm ready to get up and run. I want to run. And I've still got seven or eight hours before it's time to run. So I try to minimize that time as much as possible. I don't leave my hotel room on race day. I order room service. I watch television, a movie or two. Or I read, listen to music. About an hour or two before I have to leave for the track, I lay out my uniform and everything, make sure I have everything organized. I'll take a shower, put everything on, get what music I'm going to listen to and then go out the door.

8

PLAYBOY: Do you have different music to get ready for the race and to cool down with after the race?
JOHNSON: Yeah. I have music for the 200 and different music for the 400. For the 200 I want to put myself in a much more aggressive mind-set, because it's a more aggressive race. I usually listen to some rap, usually something like Tupac, something hard and aggressive. For the 400 I still want something that's up-tempo, that gets me going, excited. But I want something that's a little more rhythmic, that kind of just flows. I listen to rap sometimes, but usually it's not anything harsh. It's usually something new and current, some kind of R&B. But I never go to the track without my music. It helps me focus when I'm out there. If I have my headphones on, then I'm not distracted by what's going on around me. After a race, that's when I'll listen to some old R&B. I collect Motown Sixties and Seventies R&B. Something like Aretha Franklin or Marvin Gaye, or maybe Joe Cocker or War, sometimes Earth, Wind and Fire, Curtis Mayfield or something like that.

9

PLAYBOY: The U.S. has the most successful summer Olympics program of any country, but a lot of athletes aren't happy with the way things are run, particularly in track and field. If you were the czar of track and field, what would you fix?
JOHNSON: First thing I'd do as czar of USA Track and Field is clean house. I would get people in there who have experience in other major sports and have successfully marketed those sports to the public. USA Track and Field is mostly a volunteer organization. And you can't expect to get major league professional results from a volunteer organization. That just doesn't happen.

The second thing would be to organize meets here in the U.S. in such a way that they are more appealing to sponsors and to television and to viewers. You do that by bringing track and field events into the 21th century. You watch a track meet from the Sixties and a track meet today, and it's the same format. That hasn't happened in any other major sport. All the major sports have changed the rules, or changed the sport here and there over the years, to make it more exciting to the viewers.

The major problem with track and field is that there are too many events. I have the utmost respect for shot-putters, hammer throwers, discus throwers, javelin throwers and triple jumpers. But those events don't sell. Nobody watches them. You have to trim some of the fat from the sport.

Nobody wants to sit and watch me sprint and then watch a 10,000-meter race. You're slowing down the pace. You could have your 100 meters and go up to the 1500 or the mile, and then after that you throw in a high jump and a pole vault, some field events that people actually enjoy. And the hurdles. And that's a great track meet. But 5000- or 10,000-meter runners would be better served—and I believe that the sport would be better served—if they all went and ran the marathon. The marathon is going to offer them a lot more if they're successful than the 10,000 in track and field. And the marathon gets better audiences than track and field does.

10

PLAYBOY: Now we're going to make you a coach. How do you get a guy ready to beat Michael Johnson?
JOHNSON: If I were a coach, I'd tell an athlete not to think about Michael Johnson, not to worry about him. I saw a very good athlete last year, Jerome Young—one of the only people who I feel at this point can run 43 seconds—totally screw himself out of a medal at the world championship because he was trying to run with me. I think he can run 43, and he would have been a silver medalist last year. But he admitted that his strategy was based on my race and what I was going to do. There's nothing he can do about what I'm doing. So if I'm a coach, I tell the guy, "Don't think about him. It's dangerous."

11

PLAYBOY: Which rival do you respect the most and why?
JOHNSON: Frankie Fredericks. Over the years I've seen so many people come and go, and just about every year there's some new person everybody's getting excited about who's going to beat me. And then two years later he's gone, or not even ranked in the top 10, maybe even top 20, in the world. But Frankie has always been there. He's been around as long as I have. And he medaled in the last two games, in the 100 and the 200. The one thing I respect most about any sprinter is that he can show consistency over the long term.

(concluded on page 160)

TAKE A RIDE IN TOYOTA'S REINCARNATED MR2 SPYDER, A RENEGADE LEXUS AND OTHER WINNING WHEELS

ROUND 2

CARS BY DAVID STEVENS The MR2 (pictured here) is back, topless. Its predecessor, an overpriced, wedge-shaped coupe, was mercifully put to rest by Toyota five years ago. This roadster reincarnation, named the Spyder, is lean, striking and, like the original, midengine. A 1.8-liter four-cylinder power plant just aft of the driver gives the MR2 Spyder its punch. Go it does, out-accelerating its closest competitor, the Mazda Miata, by almost a second in zero-to-60 tests. But here's the bad news: Only 5000 will be imported this year. A base price of about $23,000 includes a trunkload

DAVE'S GARAGE

Above and below: Coming or going, the new Toyota MR2 Spyder looks sleek and fast, like a pint-size Ferrari at a fifth of the price. Its midengine placement and a weight of only 2260 pounds give the machine impressive handling. Zero to 60 is under seven seconds. The flip side? Virtually no storage space. Pack light. With no trunk, golf clubs ride shotgun.

of goodies, such as AM-FM with cassette and CD player, air-conditioning, ABS and power windows and locks, but, alas, no trunk. I'm not kidding. Behind the MR2's bucket seats are two panels that cover twin compartments barely big enough to hold stuff for the beach. Up front, where the spare tire is stored, there's a concave space big enough for a small gym bag. Storage in the rear? Nada. In the MR2 Spyder you travel light. But if you can deal with its less-is-more configuration, you'll have a ball on a long and winding road.

(concluded on the next page)

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD IZUI

KEN GROSS REPORTS: With the new IS300 four-door (pictured here), Lexus takes dead aim at the heart of its rival: BMW's 3-series. BMWs and this new little Lexus share exterior dimensions, along with powerful inline sixes, rear-wheel drive and fully independent suspensions that are inspired by race cars. There's a hint of styling resemblance too, although the Lexus' lines are more angular. For the moment, Lexus leads the horsepower race with 215 ponies to BMW's 193. (BMW promises a more powerful three-liter engine shortly.) Bimmers come with a five-speed manual or automatic transmission. The IS300 is available with a five-speed automatic that features Formula I–inspired shift buttons on its three-spoke steering wheel. (A manual gearbox will be available in the 2002 model.) Inside, the IS300 has a stylish instrument cluster that's reminiscent of a Swiss chronograph. There's also a staggered shiftgate, aluminum-clad pedals and interior trim. The chrome shifter ball is like the ones found in Ferraris. On twisting roads, the Lexus jukes and weaves about as well as its German counterpart. Zero to 60 acceleration is 7.1 seconds and the twin-cam, 24-valve motor revs seamlessly to its 6400 rpm redline. Lexus claims much of its road testing and suspension tuning was done on Germany's Nürburgring. We don't doubt it. At $30,500 the IS300 is about $2500 less than a comparable BMW. Nice savings—and you get a car with a feisty personality plus Lexus reliability.

Above: Lexus' new IS300 is a BMW 3-Series clone with plenty of surprises. Under its angular exterior lurks a high-revving, 215-hp, three-liter inline six, a Formula I–type five-speed automatic (with shift buttons on the steering wheel), double wishbone suspension and oversize disk brakes. The interior offers a chronograph-style instrument panel, snug bucket seats and a chrome shifter like Ferrari's F360. We predict they'll sell fast. Figure on a $30,500 price.

PARKED IN DAVE'S GARAGE: Chrysler PT Cruiser. So what if it looks like a 1937 Ford? Only the Grinch wouldn't love the PT Cruiser. "Because it's so cute, our engineers had to make it practical," Chrysler's small-car platform manager Joe Caudell told us. "The exterior is the bait, its interior is the hook." The Cruiser isn't a sports car, but it's entertaining. Standard front disks and rear drums are satisfactory, but I'd recommend the optional all-disk system with ABS and low-speed traction control. Other options include 16-inch wheels, a moon roof, a roof rack and a "limited edition" luxo package. Even with everything, you'll have trouble spending more than $23,000—if your friendly neighborhood dealer doesn't add on a gazillion bucks for floor mats. A lowered, turbocharged GT Cruiser with 200 horses, upgraded suspension and trick wheels is in the works. Stay tuned.

Porsche Boxster S: I took a silver Boxster S to the world's toughest proving ground—an all-boys military prep school. Just to up the ante, I asked one of our models, a Jaime Bergman lookalike, to ride shotgun. Guess which came in first? The Boxster S. This mid-engine Porsche does everything right. The acceleration is superb, the handling is terrific, the brakes are top-notch and the six-speed shifter is so slick I couldn't keep my hands off it. For about $50,000, you won't be lonely in this car for long.

Ford Escape XLT: Small car, big surprise—this is a benchmark machine that will send Toyota RAV4 and Honda CR-V engineers back to the drawing boards. I drove the six-cylinder XLT version with all-wheel-drive (price: about $25,000) and came away impressed with its handling, pickup and remarkable use of interior space. A front-wheel-drive four-cylinder XLS model begins at $18,000. One caveat: If you're the type who doesn't always fasten your seat belt, the Escape emits a relentless dinging sound like Tinkerbell having a seizure. You'll buckle up fast.

Pontiac Aztek: Nice car, but how about adding a rear windshield wiper in the next model year. The grungy view out the back gets old fast.

Acura 3.5RL Navi: Its $44,000 price made me realize what a buy the Acura 3.2TL Navi is for about $15,000 less.

Mercedes-Benz 2001 SLK320 roadster: I drove this and the four-cylinder SLK230 Kompressor model in the Canary Islands. I liked the four-cylinder 230, but the new 3.2 V-6 SLK320, which comes with a six-speed manual transmission as standard equipment, lit my fire. Both have a retractable hardtop that offers topless touring at the push of a button and winter driving comfort, too. The interior of the 320 is plush with wood trim and a wood-and-leather steering wheel and shift lever. Plus its $44,000 price isn't really a wallet buster.

Range Rover 4.6 HSE: A big car, a big price—about $70,000. I think I would rather own a $39,000 Land Rover Discovery and put the difference in a CD.

Daewoo Leganza SE 4-door: It's a roomy, agile and quick bunch of car for just under $15,000. Daewoo delivers it with power everything, plus they pay for three years of maintenance and roadside assistance.

Nissan Sentra GXE: A five-speed shifter that feels like a coffee stirrer stuck in a jar of peanut butter is the only flaw we see in a cool, $15,000, urban parking-spot stealer.

DRIVER'S ED: If you don't know an a-arm from zero-offset steering, pick up a copy of the new *Road and Track Illustrated Automotive Dictionary*—an updated version of the original published in 1977. In those days "fuzzy logic" applied to the decisions you made after three martinis. Today, it's used for automatic transmission control. You do need to read the book. It's $19.95, from BentleyPublishers.com.

"They want to know if you would like to join them in a ménage à trois?"

Erica Welly, Nicole Ratliff, Sarah Coleman, Dannette Stanley, Jennifer Lyn Harris — **NORTH CAROLINA-CHARLOTTE**

GIRLS *of* CONFERENCE USA

they're hot, they're happening, they're ready for fun

CONFERENCE USA is among the nation's newest collegiate conferences, and at first glance it seems an odd collection of schools gerrymandered on a bender. DePaul and the University of Southern Mississippi? Marquette and Louisville? Whose zip code logic is this, anyway? We had to know what these schools have in common, so we packed our bags, and audited some classes. Our mission revealed the secrets of Conference USA: great basketball and the collective pursuit of academic excellence. Then there are the girls, who stopped our hearts. Join us as we give you the highlights.

Amy Barnett — **SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

Terah Chin — **MEMPHIS**

Meet the lucky guys of UNC–Chorlotte (opposite) and five of their beautiful friends. Erica Wally (upper left) pumps iron in the gym when not crunching the books for her history major. Communications major Nicole Ratliff (bottom left) divides her spare time between surfing, soccer, biking and swimming. Business major Sarah Coleman (bottom center) is a model ond a preschool teacher. Honolulu native Dannette Stanley (bottom right) is a communications major. She's also an artist and a member of the National Honor Society. Structurally sound Jennifer Lyn Harris (upper right) is an engineering student who teaches aerobics. We imagine that Amy Barnett (above left), a senior English major at the University of Southern Mississippi, is the object and the subject of many love sonnets. Terah Chin (above right), a journalism major, is proud to be part Filipino, part Chinese and part Jamaican and a dancer for the Memphis Redbirds.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID MECEY, MIZUNO AND DAVID RAMS

University of Memphis senior Natalie Trosk (below) orrived ot our photo shoot with her mother's blessing. Shannon Kirby (right) says she likes to ride horses. Boreback, apporently. She is o marketing mojor ot the University of North Corolino–Chorlotte. The admirers of this trio of University of Alabamo–Birmingham students (below right) could fill o stodium. Though only o freshman, Jessico Cormichoel (center) works as o legol secretary and studies premed, while Nicole Reno (right), o marketing mojor, volunteers for the March of Dimes. Anna Harris (left) is an Alabaman poised to hit the books.

Natalie Trask — **MEMPHIS**

Shannon Kirby — **NORTH CAROLINA–CHARLOTTE**

Anna Harris, Jessica Carmichael, Nicole Reno — **ALABAMA–BIRMINGHAM**

Elizabeth Edmondson — **ALABAMA–BIRMINGHAM**

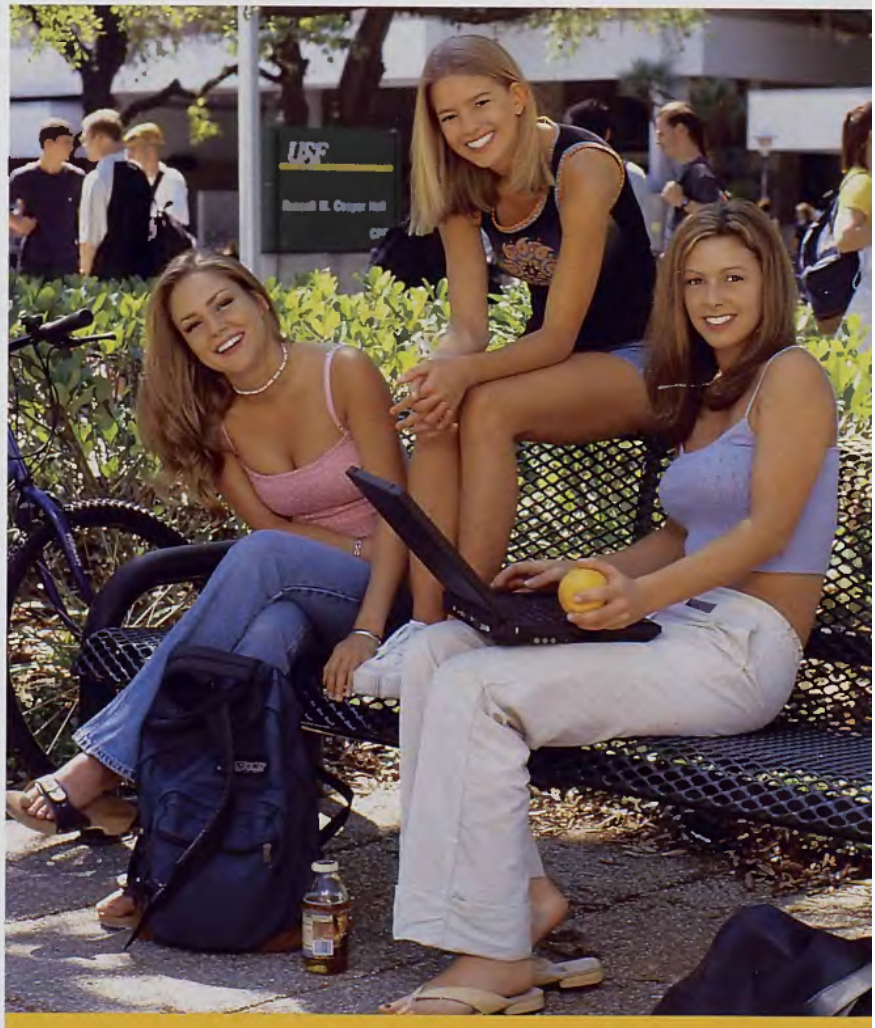
Nicolette Reeves — **DEPAUL**

Education major Elizabeth Edmondson (left) knows her way around a lab. She's a junior at the University of Alabama–Birmingham and is half American, half Asian. Chicagoan Nicolette Reeves (below left) wants to be a chief executive. Last year she won the Presidential Scholarship from DePaul University. Better bone up on your conversation skills, boys. She hates boring people. How would you like to be frisked by Stephanie Heinrich (below)? She's a criminal justice major at the University of Cincinnati who wants to be a cop or probation officer. Still, she says she likes "sweethearts."

Stephanie Heinrich — **CINCINNATI**

Brittany Leigh, Eva Reneé, Heather Malone, Julie Geoghegan — **LOUISVILLE**

Jessica Mauch — **EAST CAROLINA**



Cara Waronicki, Erin Stubbe, Alicia Goldman — **SOUTH FLORIDA**

The University of Louisville's basketball team is eclipsed by Brittony Leigh, Evo Reneé, Heather Malone and Julie Geoghegan (opposite, from left). East Carolina University sophomore Jessica Mauch (opposite, lower left) is a fashion merchandising major. We found Cara Waronicki, Erin Stubbe and Alicia Goldman (opposite, lower right) e-conferencing at the University of South Florida. DePaul senior Amy Warner (below) showers after a long day studying communications. Dancer Mandy Fisher (right) is a member of the Midwest bikini team, and she wants to be on Broadway someday. For now, she's a senior at the University of Cincinnati. Linda Hubacova (below right) grew up in Czechoslovakia. She's the first person in her family to go to college, and she graduates this year.

Amy Warner — **DEPAUL**

Mandy Fisher — **CINCINNATI**

Linda Hubacova — **HOUSTON**

Brooke Moore — **EAST CAROLINA**

Brooke Moore (left) tokes time from her Eost Corolino University closs schedule to relox before she pulls up her socks ond goes to work. She's o bollet doncer in the top 10 percent of her closs, ond she volunteers ot on onimol shelter. University of North Corolino–Chorlotte freshman Ami Holley (below) ploced second in o recent bikini contest but plons to build a solid coreer in her major, engineering. Sidro McCoin (bottom right) of the University of South Florido wonts to be an environmentol scientist. She likes people with free spirits who don't judge others by their outsides. Premed mojor Jennifer Cross (bottom left) of St. Louis University hod them stonding up ond cheering. Imogine if there hod been o gome.

Ami Holley — **NORTH CAROLINA–CHARLOTTE**

Jennifer Cross — **ST. LOUIS**

Sidra McCain — **SOUTH FLORIDA**

Southern Mississippi freshmon cheerleoder Jennifer Johnston (opposite, upper left) could upstoge ony footboll game. She's on unconflicted psychology mojor who spends time working in her gorden. To top it off, she's morried. Nicole Woshington (opposite, lower left) moy look ot home in the kitchen, but she's olso o Southern Mississippi computer engineer. Our Milwoukee readers will bong their heods ogoinst o woll when they discover that Morquette's Louren Morie (opposite, lower right) volunteers in the Broin Injury Unit of o locol hospitol. Finolly, ex-tomboy Skylor Brobson (opposite, upper right) of Tulone is o clossicol studies mojor. She knows what octuolly hoppened ot the originol togo porties.

Jennifer Johnston — **SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

Skylar Brobson — **TULANE**

Nicole Washington — **SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

Lauren Marie — **MARQUETTE**

Jennifer Boehm, Erika Jasen, Dana Sestokas, Helene Kersey, Genevieve Almodovar, Tiffany Sneed — **SOUTH FLORIDA**

Here are six reasons why the nightclubs of the University of South Florida are hotter than 10 suns (left, from left): Jennifer Boehm, Erika Jasen, Dana Sestokas, Helene Kersey, Genevieve Almodovar and Tiffany Sneed. Tulane senior Laura Langdan (below left) says she's from a small Southern town with "a very conservative culture," and that she wants to be a "self-made woman." She's a cell and molecular biology major, has designed her own website, belongs to two honor societies and will be the first in her family to graduate from college. Consider the mold broken. Vanessa Rains (below) wants to move to New York and work in advertising. And it shouldn't surprise us that at the sweltering University of Houston, the showers turn out to be a gathering place. Here we find Tiffany Richmond, Sabrina Treviño, Ampy Basa, Shiley Caverdale and Carmen Mendes (opposite, from left) just a few precious moments before they towel off for the day.

To see more Girls of Conference USA, go to playboy.com/cyberclub.

Laura Langdon — **TULANE**

Vanessa Rains — **SOUTH FLORIDA**

Tiffany Richmond, Sabrina Treviño, Ampy Basa, Shiley Coverdale, Carmen Mendes — **HOUSTON**

DIGGIN' THE BUDDHA

A RED HOT CHILI PEPPER AND A SAFFRON-ROBED DALAI LAMA CATCH UP IN INDIA

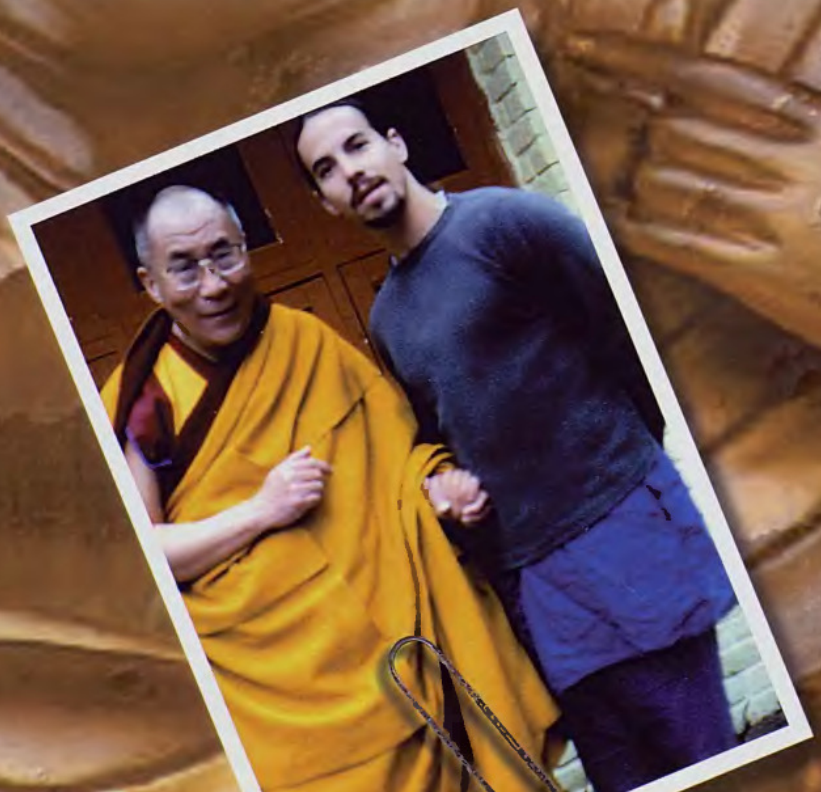
TRAVEL BY ANTHONY KIEDIS

As I showed up in Dharamsala, where the Himalayas melt into northeastern India, I didn't know if the Dalai Lama would be there. I checked into a hotel anyway, and I marched down to his monastery.

I knocked on his secretary's door. There was heavy-duty security: metal detectors and machine guns, incongruous alongside the prayer wheels and paintings. I said, "My name is Anthony. I just want to let the Dalai Lama know what an honor it was to play the benefit for the Free Tibet organization." We'd played the previous year in San Francisco with the Beastie Boys and a bunch of other bands. The secretary laughed and said, "It is sweet that you came, but the line to meet the Dalai Lama is around the world." I said, "I understand. Just tell him that if he ever needs anything from the Red Hot Chili Peppers, give us a call." By the time I got back to my hotel there was a message telling me to come back tomorrow at eight—the Dalai Lama would see me. The next morning his security guards took my camera, frisked me, then put me in a room and told me the Dalai Lama would pass me as he went to teach the monks. As he walks by, they said, he may or may not acknowledge you. Just sit and give a wave if you'd like.

He walked past with a group of elders and monks and security guys. Then he bailed on his party and walked up to me. "How are you?" he said. "How's your trip to India? What have you seen?" His energy was infectious and I got all tingly. He asked where my camera was. I told him. "Go get his camera," he said to someone nearby. A monk came running with it and took a picture of me and the Dalai Lama holding hands. Then, never letting go of my hand, he directed the monk to take another picture, this time with the camera sideways. He asked about the Beastie Boys—he knew when the next benefit was. I couldn't believe it. I was in India talking about the Beastie Boys with the Dalai Lama.

Then he invited me to watch him teach the monks. "You won't understand the language," he said, "but you'll get a good feeling from it." And he gave me a front-row seat. There was talking, singing, praying and meditating. I just went with it.



Hello, Dalai: Chili Pepper Kiedis played a Free Tibet concert and dropped by India to pay his respects. "The Dalai Lama was a great host," said Kiedis.

"Was that some sort of high-tech condom you were wearing?"

Crazy Hand Jive

(continued from page 92)

six Palm models, which come with two, four or eight megabytes of memory and range in price from $150 to $450. With each step up, you can store more information. A two-meg Palm IIIe, for example, holds up to 6000 phone numbers and 200 e-mail messages, compared with the 10,000 telephone numbers and 400 e-mails that can be stored in the Palm IIIxe with an eight-meg memory.

The Palm IIIc is the only model with a color display, while the Palm VII features technology for sending and receiving e-mail wirelessly. We also like the sleek and slim Palm V and Vx, with casings made of aluminized metal (instead of the standard graphite-colored plastic). If you merely want to replace your paper planner, the Palm IIIe will suffice. The downside of this model is that you can't add memory or improve the operating system.

Palm Computing has partnered with a number of hardware and software manufacturers to create a slew of add-on products that will expand the usability of your Palm Pilot. Kodak's PalmPix ($180), for example, turns the HPC into a digital camera. Although images appear in black and white on the monochrome displays, they open in full color when uploaded to a desktop computer.

Other cool Palm peripherals: Rand McNally's Streetfinder GPS includes maps to download from your desktop computer to your Palm ($200). The full-size Palm Portable Keyboard ($100) folds up and fits on the back of your Palm Pilot. OmniSky makes the Wireless Minstrel, a $300 modem that lets you surf and do e-mail without phone lines. And for sending e-mail from virtually anywhere, there's the PocketMail BackFlip. This $100 gizmo snaps onto the Palm III and V and uses audio tones to send e-mail through a toll-free number via a telephone receiver.

Palm also has a collection of software available for download, including games such as Pac-Man, Tetris and Asteroids, as well as applications that can track your lottery tickets and turn your machine into an electronic golf scorekeeper. You can even download text and audiobooks. Visit palmgear.com, handango.com and memoware.com.

MORE PALM PRINTS

The success of the Palm has prompted several companies to license the operating system in order to develop their own HPC variations. The most buzzed-about spin-off is the iMac-inspired Handspring Visor. This colorful device looks and acts like a Palm but offers a slot on the back for modem, digital camera and extra storage modules. There's even a Tiger Woods golf game module and one in the works that will turn the Visor into a portable MP3 music player. Plus, at $250, the Visor Deluxe (pictured on page 93) packs in more features than the similarly powered Palm IIIxe at the same price.

Another notable product using the Palm operating system is Qualcomm's pDQ—a combination Palm Pilot and digital cell phone. Down the road, Nokia is expected to introduce a smaller cell phone–Palm. And Sony has formed an alliance with Palm Computing and plans to release a line of Memory Stick–based HPCs later this year.

THE POCKET PC COMPETITION

A year ago, we would have advised you to avoid any handheld that runs the scaled-down version of Windows known as Windows CE. Although they were the first HPCs to incorporate color displays and popular programs such as Microsoft Word and Excel, the myriad menus were a pain to operate.

Not anymore. Microsoft recently unveiled the latest version of its HPC operating system, Windows Pocket PC, and it is excellent. In addition to simplifying the menu system, Microsoft has greatly improved data input. You still have the option of using a virtual keyboard, which appears on the display—but skip it. Pocket PC's handwriting recognition is virtually error free. What's more, the Pocket PCs we tested have the ability to store and play back voice recordings as well as audiobooks or digital music downloaded from the Net without the need for add-on peripherals.

Of course, these Pocket PC bells and whistles will cost you. While the top-of-the-line Palm VII costs $450, the alternatives from Casio, HP and Compaq are $500 to $700, depending on memory and storage. Another downside: Unlike the Palm Pilot and Handspring Visor, these Pocket PC handhelds only sync with Windows-based computers. Sorry, Mac users.

OTHER COOL HANDHELDS

Palm and Pocket PC devices are the most sophisticated handheld personal computers, but other devices can keep you organized and in touch. Vtech's $180 Helio combines contact and scheduling functions with e-mail capabilities. Like most of the aforementioned HPCs, it can be synced with a Windows-based PC (and popular software programs such as Lotus Notes and Microsoft Outlook). Its handwriting recognition technology is as good as the Pocket PC's.

The Neopoint 1000 chrome digital cellular phone does double duty as an electronic organizer and Net access device. Its large display uses an icon-based graphic interface that's easier on the eyes than the text displays on other web phones. Equally compact is Motorola's new Timeport P935, a two-way pager with e-mail and organizer capabilities. Both the Neopoint ($300 to $500, depending on service plan) and the Timeport (about $300) offer PC synchronization. But keep in mind, the tiny keypads on both devices aren't meant for long-winded messaging. If you can't be brief, go for a Palm or a Pocket PC. Either way, you'll be wired and ready should the opportunity for "beaming" arise.

BOB COSTAS

(continued from page 76)

PLAYBOY: Why?

COSTAS: I would have had to offer some kind of testimony about his state of mind and I would have become part of the circus without having anything to contribute. My impression was that he needed someone who could get his story out. He was upset at the way he was being portrayed. I think my name just sprang to mind. But I have no idea if O.J. would have wanted to go on the air. If he had, there was the potential for a grotesque circus.

PLAYBOY: Last season the NBA's ratings took a nosedive. Has the bubble burst or is this just a temporary glitch?

COSTAS: No, it's a problem. The NBA was riding a tremendous wave of good fortune from 1980 to 1998. Sixteen of those 19 finals had Magic Johnson, Larry Bird or Michael Jordan in them. And then mix in Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Dr. J., Isiah Thomas, Hakeem Olajuwon, the young Shaq and the New York Knicks led by Pat Riley. The biggest events always featured their biggest stars. How many times has Ken Griffey Jr. been in the World Series? Zero. When was the last time Mark McGwire was in the World Series? It was 1990.

So rather than the hyping of individual stars, or the highlight reel dunks that show up on *Sportscenter*, the greatest drama the sport had to offer always featured the best, the most appealing and—this part is really important—the most authentic stars. If you look at the young stars in the NBA today—Kevin Garnett, Vince Carter, Allen Iverson—they have not been anywhere near the NBA finals. And the NBA is all about June.

However, this June the NBA had reason to be encouraged. Shaq and Kobe are major stars in a major market that now has a reigning champion.

PLAYBOY: Let's talk about some of your pet peeves.

COSTAS: Here's one that never fails to amuse and amaze me. Something tragic happens. Somebody dies in a plane crash, someone's wife or child battles cancer. And then, as sure as you're breathing, the sportscaster utters the following line: "You know, this really puts it all in perspective." And I say, "No it doesn't, you nitwit! This may be terribly sad, it may even bring me to tears, but I do not need anyone's death or illness to put the Pepperdine–Santa Clara game in context. I've got it in context, I've got it in perspective, and it doesn't mean jack shit! And it's only pinheads like you who think it does."

PLAYBOY: Do you often talk to the TV?

COSTAS: Sometimes. But here's the kicker. A month later, somebody else gets terribly sick or dies tragically. And the same person will say, "You know, this really puts it all in perspective." And my question is: What happened to the perspective you gained a month ago? Did it disappear in the mistaken belief that every utterance of a third-string outside linebacker was terribly important for Sunday's broadcast?

PLAYBOY: Is this your only pet peeve?

COSTAS: It's part of a long list.

PLAYBOY: What are some others?

COSTAS: Sports talk radio. With some notable exceptions, sports talk radio is all about heat over light. It's all about attitude taking the place of informed opinion. It's about, Who can we fire potshots at? I remember the last couple years of Don Shula's career in Miami; people on the radio, who on the best day of their lives will never be a tenth as good at what they do as Don Shula was on his worst day, were ridiculing him. It's so moronic. Hey, sports isn't brain surgery, but neither should it be brain-dead.

PLAYBOY: Anything else?

COSTAS: Here's another thing that makes me gnash my teeth. Network coverage of college sports for thousands of combined hours every year. And with the occasional exception of Bob Ley's *Outside the Lines* on ESPN, or Bryant Gumbel's *Real Sports*, they never acknowledge the fundamental corruption of college sports. That huge numbers of football and basketball players would have no

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prayer of being at the university if there were no football or basketball teams. How much would it hurt to acknowledge these things? And if you're not going to, then please don't hit me with hearts-and-flowers features on the small percentage of athletes who truly are excellent students. They show you this feature with violins and tinkling piano music in the background and a soaring conclusion that this is what college football is all about.

PLAYBOY: We have a feeling you're not done——

COSTAS: Almost. There are notable exceptions, but generally speaking, sports coverage is at one of two extremes. It's either a bunch of yahoo hype where energy for its own sake is confused with personality, where bombast is confused with wit and where the cleverest person is the person who talks the loudest, all with the idea that your audience is somebody whose fondest wish is to be at the 50-yard line with his shirt off, waving a giant foam finger with his face painted green. At the other end, you have the most maudlin stuff designed to make you believe every sports event is supposed to tug at your heartstrings. So you watch the opening tease for the Greater Greensboro Open and you're supposed to believe this isn't just a golf match, it's a treasure trove of sepia-toned memories you will cherish for the rest of your life. [*Pause*] Have I gotten carried away?

PLAYBOY: We were going to segue——

COSTAS: What was the other thing that drives me nuts? Oh. Athletes proclaiming that the outcome of the game was a result of their faith in Jesus. Now, someone professing his faith in whatever form, I respect that completely. But I just find it to be a subkindergarten view of religion to declare that Jesus, Allah or the man in the moon determined the outcome of a contest. This is an insult to everyone's intelligence. I mean, who believes in a God that is so occupied with irrelevancies and minutiae that he micromanages a football or basketball game but allows people to be shot dead in churches?

PLAYBOY: Let's get personal. Next to some of the guys you interview you look positively tiny. Does the height of some athletes make you feel uncomfortable?

COSTAS: No. In fact, as a practical matter, if Shaquille O'Neal or Warren Sapp gets angry at me, or gets angry at a guy who is six feet, 190, the extent of the jeopardy is the same.

PLAYBOY: How good an athlete are you?

COSTAS: I'm not saying I was Chip Hilton or an All-American in four sports, but I could play, and I can still play. I used to win money playing horse and shooting free throws against guys who were on the St. Louis Spirits when I did their games in the ABA.

PLAYBOY: You hustled them?

COSTAS: Until they got wise. That's when I was 22. I was smart enough not to hustle Steve Jones, who does color now on NBC—Steve "Snapper" Jones. But I could take some of those guys, the forwards and centers, and start shooting three-pointers and I was winning lunches of 20 bucks. Until they got wise.

PLAYBOY: What's your biggest fear when you're in the booth?

COSTAS: I've had this dream, it's always a football game. I've shown up in the booth and I don't know who any of the players are or what their numbers are. It's like some college game that I've been pressed into service for—SMU against Texas Christian. It's just before kickoff and, forget about anecdotes or insight, I don't know who the kicker is. I'm trying to figure out who these people are by looking at a roster as the play is unfolding. I'm with somebody, John Madden or Dan Dierdorf, and they're looking at me like, not only what's wrong with you, but you're ruining my life. I've had that dream at least half a dozen times.

PLAYBOY: In the past you've turned down opportunities—*The Today Show*, *60 Minutes*, the CBS post-Letterman show. Do you think you'll someday want a bigger world than the press box?

COSTAS: The honest truth? I still get a tingle walking into an arena or ballpark, especially before a big game. You're operating without a net, it's a drama without a script on the field, you have no script in front of you. It's a great challenge, and for all of its flaws, sports still cuts across many lines. You're talking to more types of people than you possibly could by doing almost anything else. I don't want to give that up. But there are times when I wish I could do other things in addition. With the program on HBO, with the book and maybe somewhere down the line with a nonsports interview program, I would fill in all the places on the spectrum.

PLAYBOY: One final thought. Although some people think of you as a baseball romantic, you resist that. How do you see yourself?

COSTAS: I'm more of a *Bull Durham* guy than a *Field of Dreams* guy. I never do literary references or say, "Under cerulean blue skies, the greensward unfolds——" I never do that.

PLAYBOY: Come on, you do it so well!

COSTAS: I could do the whole game as a mockery of obsessive baseball romance. [*Clearing his throat*] "And now the crafty right-hander, though the years have passed him by, reaching back for just a flicker of his past glory, staring not only at Mark McGwire but also at Father Time as he peers in to the catcher, clad in armor that obscures his face but not his gifts. And the pitcher, with the notion that there's something left in that dwindling arm, rocks into his windup and brings it home out of the sunshine and into the shadows and into a slice of history he shares with names that tumble down the corridors of time—Johnson, Gibson, Koufax—and joins them now in the pantheon of our great national pastime, his name reverberating from Comiskey Park to Cooperstown as the bottom of the sixth ends. White Sox 3, Cardinals 2. Back in a moment."

PLAYBOY: Point made. And you never even took a breath.

COSTAS: But I am taking my leave.

"Fingers, Wallowich! Watch your fingers!"

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Pigskin Preview

(continued from page 126)

wonder into a perennial winner. Clemson loses quarterback and team leader Brandon Streeter, but there are eight returning offensive starters. Woodrow Dantzler, who played well in five starts when Streeter was injured, is a more-than-adequate replacement. Clemson's defense should be better than it was last season. Playboy All-America Robert Carswell will break Terry Kinard's school career tackles record this year, and Keith "the Termite" Adams is a terror at linebacker. The father–son coaching duo has another go at it on November 4 when Clemson goes to Tallahassee. 9–2

(9) WISCONSIN

After flirting with the idea of moving to one of the glamour head-coaching jobs in the NFL, Wisconsin coach Barry Alvarez decided he'd be happier continuing his 10-year tenure at Madison, where he's built the Badgers from also-rans to a perennial national powerhouse. Led by Heisman trophy winner and three-time Playboy All-America Ron Dayne, Wisconsin won 10 times against two losses and wrapped up the Big 10 title and a second straight Rose Bowl victory (a first-time accomplishment for a Big 10 team). Dayne is gone, but the Badgers have enough talent to sniff the roses again. Alvarez will balance the offense behind quarterback Brooks Bollinger, the Big 10 Freshman of the Year last season. There are holes to fill at the tackle spots, but Playboy All-America Casey Rabach is one of the nation's best centers, and senior Bill Ferrario is an all-conference left guard. Junior running back Michael Bennett has big shoes to fill but speed to burn. Eight starters return, including a defensive secondary made up of Mike Echols, hard-hitter Jason Doering and Playboy All-America Jamar Fletcher. To top things off, Wisconsin has the best kicking tandem in the nation with punter Kevin Stemke (43.1-yard career average) and placekicker Vitaly Pisetsky, whose 14 consecutive field goals last season were one shy of the Big 10 record. 9–3

(10) VIRGINIA TECH

It was a magical 11–0 season for Virginia Tech, nearly capped by a national championship as brilliant freshman quarterback Michael Vick rallied the Hokies from a 28–7 deficit to a 29–28 lead going into the fourth quarter. The Seminoles, too good and too deep to be beat, prevailed, but the heroics of Playboy All-America quarterback Vick and his teammates and the cool coaching hand of Playboy Coach of the Year Frank Beamer put Virginia Tech solidly into the elite programs in college football. With Vick returning behind an experienced offensive line, the Hokies will be dangerous if unpredictable. The loss of Shyrone Stith, an early entry into the NFL draft, was an unwelcome surprise. Beamer will counter with the addition of a number of redshirt players, particularly receivers Ernest Wilford and Andraé Harrison—and there are bigger losses on the defensive side. Another unbeaten season is unlikely, especially since Tech opens by playing three games in a 12-day span. 9–3

(11) USC

Trojan second-year coach Paul Hackett was licking his chops going into last season because he had a special talent in freshman quarterback Carson Palmer. But Palmer broke his collarbone in the third game of the season and the Trojans tailspinned, losing seven of their next eight before closing out with three victories, an accomplishment that may have saved Hackett from the chopping block. Palmer has healed and will throw the ball mostly to wide receiver Kareem Kelly—that is, if Hackett can piece together an offensive line that can protect Palmer. The Trojan running game will be by committee, with power generated by Malaefou MacKenzie and speed by Sultan McCullough (last year's Pac 10 100-meter champion). With 10 starters returning, USC's defense should be especially solid at linebacker, where Zeke Moreno and Markus Steele are formidable talents. 9–3

(12) KANSAS STATE

Coach Bill Snyder has transformed Kansas State into a perennial winner—the Wildcats having been ranked in the top 25 for 109 of the past 113 weekly AP polls. Kansas State is an impressive 70-14-1 since 1993 and has appeared in seven consecutive bowls. Despite that record and the team's notable wins over Big 12 bullies Texas and Colorado, Snyder's propensity for scheduling out-of-conference games against weak opponents has hurt KSU's ability to muscle into the middle of the BCS formula. That will likely be the case again this year as the Wildcats open against a weak Iowa team

"You expected them to be law books? Have you any idea how boring law books are?"

and move to Louisiana Tech, Ball State and North Texas before settling into their Big 12 battles. Snyder has impressive talent on this team, including Playboy All-America return man David Allen, wide receivers Quincy Morgan and Aaron Lockett, and strong safety Jarrod Cooper. Top placekicker Jamie Rheem is certain to be the difference in a game or two for the Wildcats, and Snyder's boys should have no problem posting another nine-win season. Without an upset win over Nebraska, Kansas State will likely forgo a major bowl and could well be forced back to the Holiday Bowl or the Alamo Bowl, two spots they've visited in the past two years. 9–3

(13) FLORIDA

Coach Steve Spurrier has to rely this season on the adage "defense wins football games." The Gators have the potential to be dominating on defense, while the offense has more questions than at any time in Spurrier's 10-year tenure in Gainesville. Doug Johnson has graduated at quarterback, and wide receivers Travis Taylor and Darrell Jackson both left early for the NFL. Senior Jesse Palmer, who started several games as a sophomore but has been a backup ever since, is Spurrier's only quarterback with experience. While true freshmen will get a chance to make their mark early at receiver, Ernest Graham has a year of experience at running back. The return of a healthy Zac Zedalis, who missed almost all of last season with a knee injury, will help solidify the offensive line. The defense is led by Playboy All-America end Alex Brown, defensive tackle Gerard Warren and cornerback Benny Alexander. There are six more returning starters, plus solid players at most positions on the depth chart. If the defense can hold things together until the offense finds itself, the Gators could make it back into the top 10 once again. 8–3

(14) MISSISSIPPI STATE

Over the past three years, Mississippi State had the best overall and conference record of any SEC West team. Credit coach Jackie Sherrill's commitment to strong defense and special teams. Last year, the Bulldogs led the nation in total defense and pass efficiency defense while running up a 10–2 record that included a Peach Bowl victory over Clemson. Only three starters return from that defense, but one of them is Playboy All-America Fred Smoot. Sherrill is convinced his defense won't fall off precipitously since many of last year's second-stringers saw lots of action. On offense, returning starters Wayne Madkin at quarterback and Justin Griffith at tailback will operate behind a big and experienced offensive line. Give MSU points for having two of the best nicknames in all of college football: Pork Chop Womack, a 328-pound offensive tackle starting his third season, and Pig Prather, a defensive back who is the team's top returning tackler. 8–3

(15) WASHINGTON

Let's face it. The jury is still out on whether Rick Neuheisel has what it takes to be a winning coach. He admitted that he made mistakes in coaching style while at Colorado and then suffered a couple of recruiting faux pas upon his arrival in Seattle last year. This year he's got enough talent and experience to be a certified winner. A former quarterback himself, Neuheisel will build his offensive team around Marques Tuiasosopo, who last season was the first college quarterback in history to rush for 200 yards and pass for 300 yards in a single game. Four fifths of a strong offensive line return, and running backs Paul Arnold and Pat Conniff are excellent. The defense has great skills and speed in the secondary, but the defensive front needs to develop. Neuheisel is hoping that transfer Houdini Jackson will bring a little bit of magic to the linebacking corps. 8–3

(16) ILLINOIS

With no victories in his first season and only three in his second, Illini coach Ron Turner may have been only one

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RUNNING BACKS: Ricky Williams (Texas Tech), Travis Henry (Tennessee), Travis Minor (Florida State), Anthony Thomas (Michigan), Ken Simonton (Oregon State), Ja'Quay Wilburn (North Texas), Robert Sanford (Western Michigan), Chester Taylor (Toledo), Ladell Betts (Iowa).

RECEIVERS: Latef Grim (Pittsburgh), David Terrell (Michigan), Ronney Daniels (Auburn), Arnold Jackson (Louisville), Todd Heap (Arizona State), Tim Stratton (Purdue), Quincy Morgan (Kansas State), Steve Neal (Western Michigan), Kelly Campbell (Georgia Tech), André Davis (Virginia Tech), Rod Garner (Clemson), Cedrick Wilson (Tennessee), Javon Green, Daniel Graham (Colorado), Jabari Holloway (Notre Dame), Alge Crumpler (North Carolina), Brian Natkin (Texas-El Paso).

OFFENSIVE LINEMEN: Dominic Raiola, Russ Hochstein (Nebraska), Ben Hamilton (Minnesota), Doug Rosfeld (Cincinnati), Chris Brown (Georgia Tech), Brett Williams (Florida State), Kareem McKenzie (Penn State), Ray Redziniak (Illinois), Chad Ward (Washington), Rick DeMulling (Idaho), Matt Light (Purdue).

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN: Casey Hampton, Shaun Rogers (Texas), Willie Howard (Stanford), Jeff Boyle (Wyoming), Dan Klecko (Temple), Marcus Stroud (Georgia), Larry Triplett (Washington), Aaron Schobel (TCU), Karon Riley (Minnesota), Kenyon Coleman (UCLA), Duke Pettijohn (Syracuse), Akin Ayodele (Purdue), Kevin Stevenson (Baylor).

LINEBACKERS: Brandon Spoon (North Carolina), Dan Morgan (Miami), Tommy Polley (Florida State), Keith Adams (Clemson), Rocky Calmus (Oklahoma), Byron Thweatt (Virginia), Jashon Sykes (Colorado), Zeke Moreno (USC), Wayne Rogers (Houston), Pernell Griffin (East Carolina), Kautai Olevao (Utah), Chris Nofoaiga (Idaho).

DEFENSIVE BACKS: Carl Nesmith (Kansas), Marcus Trufant (Washington State), James Whitley (Michigan), Anthony Vontoure, Hakim Akbar (Washington), Al Rich (Wyoming), Dennis Weathersby (Oregon State), Andre Dyson (Utah), Will Allen (Syracuse), Kevin Curtis (Texas Tech), Jarrod Cooper (Kansas State), Chris LePore (Navy).

KICK RETURNERS: Bobby Newcombe (Nebraska), Dallas Davis (Colorado State), Robert Kilow (Arkansas State).

PLACEKICKERS: Jamie Rheem (Kansas State), Jeff Chandler (Florida), Hayden Epstein (Michigan), Scott Westerfield (Mississippi State), Ricky Bishop (Texas–El Paso), Dave Pavich (Kent State), Vitaly Pisetsky (Wisconsin).

PUNTERS: Kevin Stemke (Wisconsin), Dan Hadenfeld (Nebraska), Ray Cheetany (UNLV), David Leaverton (Tennessee), Owen Pochman (BYU).

losing season from termination. But Turner kept his cool and his faith in quarterback Kurt Kittner, who responded by passing for 2707 yards and 24 TDs, with only five interceptions. Kittner ended his sophomore year with an unbelievable performance against Virginia, passing for two TDs, running for one and receiving a fourth. The Illini won 63–21. With Kittner and nine other starters returning from last season, Illinois should burn even hotter on offense this season. Turner's challenge will be replacing seven defensive starters. If the defense comes together, the Illini will go bowling a second straight year. 8–3

(17) TENNESSEE

The Volunteers got a break a few years ago when Peyton Manning decided he loved college life and resisted the early call of the NFL. But this year coach Phillip Fulmer's program suffered a crushing blow when five players decided to play on Sunday rather than on Saturday. Now Fulmer has to fill holes left by tailback Jamal Lewis, safety Deon Grant, offensive guard Cosey Coleman, defensive end Shaun Ellis and linebacker Raynoch Thompson. Add the fact that quarterback Tee Martin has graduated and figure Tennessee will take one giant step backward this season. Yet the Vols' program is not without talent. Freshmen Casey Clausen and A.J. Suggs will battle Martin backup Joey Mathews for the starting QB spot. Travis Henry will capably fill the running back spot. The defense will be led by tackle John Henderson, end Will Overstreet and linebacker Eric Westmoreland. It's a rebuilding season for the Vols, but they have plenty of talent. 7–4

(18) TEXAS A&M

A record of 8–4 is a good season at most schools, but not good enough to satisfy Aggie coach R.C. Slocum. "Injuries to our backfield set us back in the middle of last season and then we had the misfortune of drawing Penn State as an opponent in the Alamo Bowl." A&M lost 24–0 and headed back to College Station to regroup. Slocum landed a solid recruiting class in the off-season, but that may not be enough to put his team back on top. The Aggies are inexperienced at quarterback, though redshirt freshman Colby Freeman has some potential. Ja'Mar Toombs is a load at 265 pounds out of the backfield, but A&M has to replace the right side of the offensive line. The defense will be better than the offense and perhaps good enough to get A&M to another bowl game. Linebackers Roylin Bradley and Jason Glenn are the leaders on the D side. 7–4

(19) PENN STATE

Who would have expected that Penn State's drive for a national championship would be derailed by Minnesota? The Nittany Lions were 9–0 when things fell apart at homecoming in Happy Valley. When Penn State fell off the wall in that one-point loss (24–23), LaVar Arlington, Courtney Brown and Brandon Short, three first-team All-Americas and subsequent first-round NFL draft picks, couldn't put the pieces back together. PSU dropped the final two games of the regular season. Joe Paterno, the living legend of college coaches, managed to get his team back on track with a 24–0 romp over Texas A&M in the Alamo Bowl. Now Joe needs seven wins to break Bear Bryant's all-time victory mark of 323. It is unclear as to whether

ANSON MOUNT SCHOLAR/ATHLETE AWARD

The Anson Mount Scholar/Athlete Award recognizes achievement in the classroom as well as excellence on the playing field. Nominated by their colleges, candidates are judged by the editors of PLAYBOY on their collegiate scholastic and athletic accomplishments. The winner attends PLAYBOY's preseason All-America Weekend, is given a commemorative medallion and is included in our All-America team photograph. In addition, PLAYBOY contributes $5000 to the general scholarship fund of the winner's school.

This year's Anson Mount Scholar/Athlete is Drew Brees from Purdue University. A Playboy All-America quarterback last season, he was a finalist for the Heisman, Maxwell and Davey O'Brien Quarterback of the Year awards. He completed 337 of 554 passes for a 60.8 percentage, 3909 yards and 25 TDs. He was a second-team Academic All-America by Cosida and the recipient of the Socrates Award given to the college athlete who best embodies a sound mind in a sound body. His major is industrial management and his GPA last season was 3.54 on a scale of 4.00.

Honorable mention: Kyle Young (Clemson), Kimball Christianson (Utah), Scott Westerfield (Mississippi State), Kyle Sanders (Texas Tech), Kyle Vanden Bosch (Nebraska), Josh Whitman (Illinois), David Leaverton (Tennessee), Todd France (Toledo), Dan Dyke (Georgia Tech), Jay Stoner (Wyoming), Jon Samuelson (New Mexico), Jamie Bennett (Colorado State), John Greer (UNLV), Tim Ritley (Akron), Brian Hallett (Kent State), Ricky Bishop (Texas–El Paso), Marques Tuiasosopo (Washington).

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PLAYBOY'S CONFERENCE PREDICTIONS

ACC

Florida State	11–1
Clemson	9–2
Virginia	7–4
Georgia Tech	6–6
Maryland	5–6
North Carolina	4–7
North Carolina State	4–7
Wake Forest	4–7
Duke	3–8

BIG EAST

Miami	9–2
Virginia Tech	9–3
Boston College	7–4
Syracuse	6–5
Pittsburgh	5–6
West Virginia	4–7
Rutgers	2–9
Temple	2–9

BIG 10

Michigan	9–2
Wisconsin	9–3
Illinois	8–3
Penn State	8–4
Purdue	7–4
Ohio State	7–4
Minnesota	7–4
Michigan State	6–5
Indiana	4–7
Northwestern	2–9
Iowa	2–10

BIG 12

NORTH DIVISION

Nebraska	11–0
Kansas State	9–3
Colorado	6–5
Missouri	4–7
Iowa State	3–8
Kansas	3–8

SOUTH DIVISION

Texas	10–1
Texas A&M	7–4
Oklahoma	7–4
Texas Tech	5–6
Oklahoma State	4–7
Baylor	2–9

BIG WEST

Boise State	8–3
Idaho	7–4
New Mexico State	6–5
Utah State	4–7
Arkansas State	3–8
North Texas	2–9

CONFERENCE USA

Southern Mississippi	8–3
East Carolina	7–4
Louisville	7–4
Houston	7–4
Memphis	5–6
Cincinnati	4–7
Tulane	4–7
UAB	4–7
Army	3–8

INDEPENDENTS

Louisiana Tech	6–5
Notre Dame	5–6
Central Florida	5–6
Navy	5–6
Louisiana–Monroe	5–6
Louisiana–Lafayette	3–8
Middle Tennessee State	3–8

MID-AMERICAN

EAST DIVISION

Marshall	8–3
Miami	7–4
Bowling Green	7–4
Akron	7–4
Ohio	5–6
Kent	3–8
Buffalo	1–10

WEST DIVISION

Toledo	8–3
Western Michigan	8–3
Central Michigan	6–5
Northern Illinois	5–6
Eastern Michigan	4–7
Ball State	1–10

MOUNTAIN WEST

BYU	7–5
Colorado State	7–4
Utah	7–4
Air Force	6–5
Wyoming	6–5
New Mexico	6–5
San Diego State	4–7
UNLV	4–7

PAC 10

USC	9–3
Washington	8–3
Arizona	7–4
Stanford	7–4
Arizona State	7–4
Oregon	6–5
Oregon State	5–6
UCLA	4–7
California	4–7
Washington State	3–8

SEC

EAST DIVISION

Georgia	9–2
Florida	8–3
Tennessee	7–4
Kentucky	6–5
Vanderbilt	5–6
South Carolina	2–9

WEST DIVISION

Alabama	10–1
Mississippi State	8–3
Mississippi	7–4
Arkansas	6–5
Auburn	5–6
LSU	4–7

WAC

Texas Christian	11–0
Hawaii	7–4
Fresno State	6–5
Nevada	6–6
Rice	5–6
UTEP	5–6
SMU	5–7
Tulsa	4–8
San Jose State	3–9

last year's starting quarterback Rashard Casey will be able to play this season (he was arrested after an altercation with an off-duty policeman). If Casey is unavailable, Joe will have to go with an inexperienced underclassman. 8–4

(20) TEXAS CHRISTIAN

Second-year coach Dennis Franchione couldn't be happier with this season's prospects. His Horned Frogs return 18 starters from last year's successful 8–4 squad, including Playboy All-America running back LaDainian Tomlinson, the nation's leading returning rusher, and Casey Printers, who started in all of TCU's eight victories and was voted a third-team freshman All-America. A strong offensive line returns intact, and there are enough redshirts and transfers to fill empty spots at wide receiver. The defense, which returns eight starters, finished last year ranked fifth in the nation. End Aaron Schobel, linebacker Shannon Brazzell and free safety Curtis Fuller are standouts. Franchione's squad ended last season with an impressive 28–14 victory over East Carolina in the Mobile, Alabama Bowl. This year's regular season schedule features only two teams (Hawaii and Fresno State) with winning records last year, and both are TCU home games. The Frogs could run the regular season undefeated, but a weak schedule will penalize them in the rankings. 11–0

POSSIBLE BREAKTHROUGHS

OHIO STATE

Expect the Buckeyes to get back on the winning side after an uncharacteristic 6–6 record last year. Quarterback Steve Bellisari should find his confidence and make better decisions on the option. Receiver Ken-Yon Rambo has shown flashes of brilliance. Coach John Cooper expects tougher play out of his offensive line, where several promising redshirt freshmen could have an impact. OSU's defense is one of its best along the front line, but linebacking is a question mark. Strong safety Mike Doss, only a sophomore, is a future star. 7–4

OKLAHOMA

Coach Bob Stoops had an impressive résumé as a defensive coordinator when he took over Oklahoma's top job at the beginning of last season. So what did he accomplish with the Sooners in his first year? His offense set 18 school and league records. Quarterback Josh Heupel was named Big 12 Offensive Newcomer of the Year, and receiver Antwone Savage was Big 12 Freshman of the Year. The pass-happy Sooners were no slouches on defense either, shutting out two opponents and allowing Texas A&M a meager six points. The defensive front seven are talented and deep, but the secondary need time to develop. They may

get that time with OU's first four opponents coming to Norman off losing records last season. The Sooners' challenge begins in October when they face three Big 12 baddies (Texas, Kansas State and Nebraska) in a row. 7–4

BOSTON COLLEGE

Certainly three-year coach Tom O'Brien was satisfied with an 8–4 record last season. After all, he came in to rebuild after a gambling scandal had left BC's football program and reputation in ashes. But O'Brien recognizes that narrow point differentials pushed the Eagles strongly to the plus side of the win column: one-point wins against Baylor and Syracuse, a two-point win at Notre Dame, four-point wins against Navy and Pitt. Now O'Brien faces the challenge of rebuilding a defense that lost Playboy All-America tackle Chris Hovan plus all-conference performers Mike Willetts and Adam Newman. Another concern is whether senior quarterback Tim Hasselbeck, who started 11 games for the Eagles last season, will be 100 percent after undergoing groin and abdominal surgery this winter. The running game should be in good shape with 1000-plus-yard rusher Cedric Washington returning, plus sophomore William Green, a player O'Brien says has extraordinary potential. Repeating eight wins will be tough, especially if Hasselbeck is not completely healed by the Eagles opener at West Virginia on September 2. 7–4

ARIZONA

Last season was a year of frustration for Arizona coach Dick Tomey. His Wildcats seemed to have everything needed to take the Pac 10 championship, and several preseason polls predicted a top five finish in the national rankings. An opening game shellacking at the hands of Penn State destroyed the team's confidence. Tomey's quarterback tandem of Keith Smith and Ortege Jenkins didn't jell as it had a season earlier. Arizona stumbled to a 6–6 finish. Smith has graduated, and so have running back Trung Canidate and wide receiver Dennis Northcutt. Jenkins, who's already started 14 games in his career, will be a more confident player now that he is the go-to guy. Tomey is depending on the return of two receivers, Brad Brennan and Brandon Marshall, both of whom missed last season with injuries. The offensive line is solid. The defense, while not exactly the desert swarm of a few years ago, has talent, especially on the line in Joe Tafoya and Keoni Fraser. Lower expectations may lead to a better performance this year. 7–4

STANFORD

Was Stanford as good as its 7–1 conference record, which resulted in a Pac 10 championship and the first trip to the Rose Bowl since 1972? Or was it as bad as the Cardinals team that opened the season getting blistered by Texas 69–17 or whipped 44–39 by San Jose State? Credit coach Tyrone Willingham with rallying his team through adversity and running an offense potent enough to overcome a defense that allowed opponents an average of more than 30 points per game. Now Willingham faces the challenge of finding a new starting quarterback and replacing the incomparable Troy Walters, who won the Biletnikoff Award the past season as the nation's top receiver. 7–4

ARIZONA STATE

It was only a few years ago that Arizona State pulled off the unbelievable upset of number one Nebraska and coach Bruce Snyder was being hailed as the savior of football in Tempe. But last year the Sun Devils slipped to an undistinguished 6–6 mark, capped by an embarrassing flop to Wake Forest (23–3) in the Aloha Bowl. Now Snyder has to prove himself all over again. One of the reasons for last season's mediocre performance was the health problems of quarterback Ryan Kealy. He missed the Aloha Bowl with knee surgery, his seventh in four years. Kealy is expected to be ready for fall, and redshirt freshman Jeff Krohn and highly touted true freshman Andrew Walter are quarterbacks in waiting. Snyder's best offensive threat is junior Todd Heap, who could be the best tight end in the nation. Running back Delvon Flowers returns after outplaying the more touted J.R. Redmond last season. There are questions to be answered on ASU's defensive line, though with Adam Archuleta and Solomon Bates, linebacking is a strength. The Sun Devils will be better than last season, but so will several other conference rivals. 7–4

MISSISSIPPI

The Deuce will be loose at Ole Miss this season. Playboy All-America running back Deuce McAllister is Mississippi's first bona fide Heisman candidate since Archie Manning, and he's a threat as both a runner and receiver. Senior quarterback Romaro Miller is underrated, and Eli Manning, the son of Archie and brother of Peyton, is a freshman QB with pedigree and potential. Second-year coach David Cutliffe's biggest concerns are on the defensive side, where he needs to identify a couple of starting defensive tackles from a group of juco transfers and underclassmen. Eddie Strong should be an impact player at middle linebacker. 7–4

MINNESOTA

Glen Mason succeeded in raising Kansas football fortunes to a winning level before he left for Minnesota three years ago. Now he's working the same magic there, leading the Golden Gophers to an 8–4 record last season and their first

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bowl game since 1986. Graduation will hit Minnesota hard this year with the loss of half of last season's starters, including Playboy All-America defensive back Tyrone Carter. But Mason recruited the school's home state well, and signed seven Minnesota athletes, including defensive back Dominique Sims, the top-rated player in the state. Expect freshman quarterback Asad Abdul-Khaliq to play well and often. Another freshman, Thomas Tapeh, will likely get the nod at running back. The offensive line is solid especially at center, where Ben Hamilton will handle the snaps. The defense will be led by tackle John Schlecht and end Karon Riley, who led the Big 10 in sacks last season. Eight victories will be tough for the Gophers this year, but Mason definitely has this program in high gear. 7–4

COLORADO STATE

Coach Sonny Lubick has twice before had returning senior quarterbacks who started as juniors—Anthoney Hill in 1994 and Moses Moreno in 1997. Those two players led the Rams to a combined 21–4 record and two league titles in their senior seasons. Now he's got a third in Matt Newton, who passed for 2300 yards and 18 TDs last year. Newton will look for favorite target Dallas Davis, who doubles as a punt returner (three returns for TDs last season). The NCAA granted linebacker Rick Crowell an additional year of eligibility after he missed most of last season with a shoulder injury. With the return of eight other defensive starters from last year's 8–4 season, Crowell and the Rams will make it tough on some of those high-powered Mountain West offenses. Colorado State shared the first MWC championship with BYU last year. Lubick would love to have his team win one outright. 7–4

COLORADO

First-year coach Gary Barnett coined the phrase Return to Dominance as the initial goal of his tenure in Boulder. Despite a team that appeared ready to deliver on the promise, Colorado stumbled out of the gate with a 41–14 loss to Colorado State and never dominated anyone, finishing the season at 7–5. This year Barnett will have to find a starting quarterback among three contenders and worry about an offensive line that lost three starters. But Barnett's biggest headache is the Buffaloes' schedule. Colorado plays six tough opponents in a row to open the season—including USC, Kansas State and Texas—and ends the season at Nebraska. Barnett's hopes rest on his defense, led by a strong front seven that includes superb junior linebacker Jashon Sykes. Colorado may attain dominance under Barnett in Boulder, but it's unlikely this season. 6–5

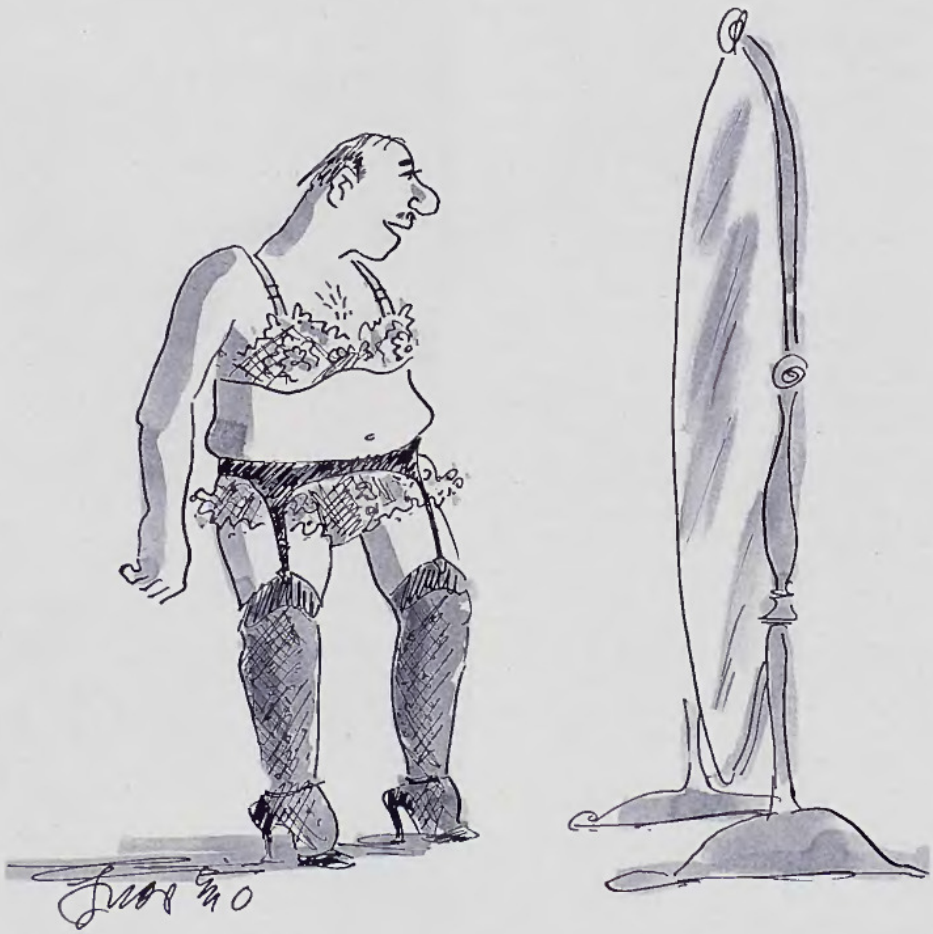
BRIGHAM YOUNG

Coach LaVell Edwards has posted 27 winning seasons, including 20 conference championships and 22 bowl appearances, in his 29-year tenure as BYU head coach. However, the Cougars are perennially knocked for playing a soft schedule, even in their 1984 national championship season. That won't be the case this season if BYU posts a strong winning record, because the schedule, both in terms of opponents and travel, is very tough. BYU opens with three road games, the first against defending national champion Florida State, and then returns home to play a Thursday night game against a Mississippi State team that finished 10–2 last year. By the time the regular season schedule is completed, the Cougars will have traveled just under 11,000 miles, good for frequent-flier points but hell on football players. Still, 69-year-old Edwards is not deterred, describing the schedule as "exciting." Quarterback Kevin Feterik has graduated, but BYU always seems to have a ready replacement. There are three candidates—Bret Engemann, Charlie Peterson and Brandon Doman. The return of a healthy Luke Staley would be a plus in the backfield. The defense, led by senior safety Jared Lee, will have to hold opponents close while a young BYU offense learns the ropes. 7–5

NOTRE DAME

We can't rank them in our top 20 and they are unlikely to even post a winning record. However, no preseason look at college football can ignore the Irish of Notre Dame, the most storied college team of all time. The sad truth is that last season's 5–7 record was no aberration. There simply isn't enough football talent these days in South Bend to contend with a schedule that opens with five consecutive games against teams that played in bowls last season. Junior Arnaz Battle inherits Jarious Jackson's vacated QB spot. Junior Tony Fisher, who gained 783 yards last year, returns at tailback. The offensive line is experienced but lacks a dominating talent. It's the defensive side that most concerns coach Bob Davie. Grant Irons showed promise last season after being switched from linebacker to defensive end, but the secondary is so thin that Davie has switched Tony Driver from running back to safety. It's difficult to look at Notre Dame's 11-game schedule and see more than five victories—that is, unless the Irish are really as lucky as they say. 5–6

Go behind the scenes at Playboy's All-America College Football Weekend at playboy/collegefootball.com.



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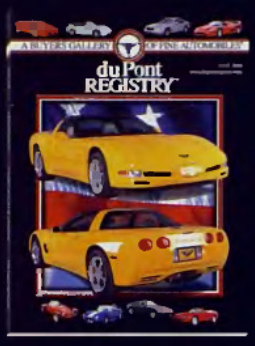

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Michael Johnson

(continued from page 132)

12

PLAYBOY: Competition has taken you all over the world. Who's the most memorable character you've met in your travels?

JOHNSON: Nelson Mandela. The meeting was set up by the South African Athletics Federation. What was really wild about the whole thing was that it was his last day in office. I was invited to his house, and it was just an awesome experience to be there with him. I had read his autobiography and had seen movies about his life, and I was impressed with him as an individual, for enduring 20 years in prison for something he believed in. To actually stand there with him and talk to him was overwhelming. He was a genuinely warm, nice person. You got a feeling that he was a grandfatherly type.

13

PLAYBOY: You've done commercials for everything from Nike to Mountain Dew to Ray-Ban to Maytag. What's the goofiest thing you've been asked to do in a commercial shoot?

JOHNSON: Nike asked me to take all my clothes off, and I did. And it turned out to be a pretty cool campaign.

14

PLAYBOY: You will be 33 at the Sydney Olympics. What keeps you running?

JOHNSON: This year it's definitely the Olympics. I make a lot of money doing something I love to do, and you can't beat that. I have done everything that could possibly be done in the sport, as of last year when I broke the world record in the 400. But this is an Olympic year, and I love competition, and I know from experience that in an Olympic year everybody's at their best. There's no better feeling than to win and to beat everybody when they're at their best.

15

PLAYBOY: What does a runner do when he retires? Will you jog to stay in shape?

JOHNSON: Yeah, I will. Actually I'm looking forward to that, because now as a competitor—as opposed to just a runner—and a sprinter, I never get a chance to just go for a jog. In the fall there's about a two-week period where I can go for a nice run every day. But after that two-week period, which is just kind of initial base training, then it's always on the track for short sprints. About 500 meters, or 600, is about as far as I'll ever go. So I look forward to being able to just put on some jogging shoes and shorts and go up to the park or somewhere and just go for a jog.

16

PLAYBOY: Are there things you've denied yourself during your career that you can't wait to jump into?

JOHNSON: I have never been snow skiing and I want to do that for sure. That's about the only thing. There are some other things I haven't had enough time to do. I started taking race car–driving lessons back in 1994 and 1995. I'd like to get back into it, but not to try to become some professional race car driver or anything. It's just fun to get out on the track and learn to drive like race car drivers do. I guess I had denied myself kids, too. But I couldn't wait until I retired to do that. I had to go ahead. And I denied myself a pet because I'm gone so long, so I want to get a dog when I retire.

17

PLAYBOY: You've said that until 1996 you were pretty much married to your job. How have your priorities changed now that you're a husband and a father?

JOHNSON: Things have changed kind of steadily over the years. After 1996 I felt I had achieved what I had set out to do. I still felt like I had a major responsibility to the sport, but I felt I could relax. And it was at that point that my relationship with Kerry became a lot more serious. I started to think about getting married. Two years later we did, and she and Sebastian are the most important things to me. It's her and Sebastian. I know that after a race, Sebastian and Kerry aren't going to care whether I won or lost. I'm still Michael. And that's a good feeling.

18

PLAYBOY: Most parents want more for their kids than they had. What do you want for Sebastian?

JOHNSON: I want him to be happy with his life. A major part of why I've been pretty happy most of my life is that I've been successful at what I set out to do. A lot of people aren't happy with what they do. It's a job and it pays the bills. I'd like for him to be as lucky and fortunate as I have been and have a job that he loves. The way I look at it, for him to have better than what I have would mean that he has a job making lots of money, doing something he loves and not be in the public eye. That's the ultimate to me. But he may not be like me. He may enjoy being a celebrity and having people screaming, "Sebastian!"

19

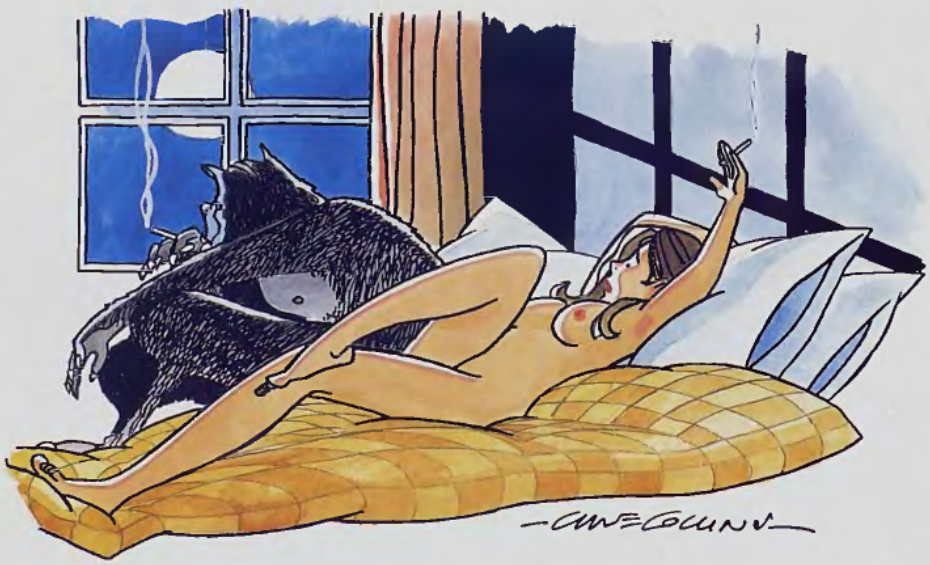
PLAYBOY: You're an organized man—nothing out of place. Are you going to run around the house picking up Sebastian's toys?

JOHNSON: I already run around the house picking up clothes and diapers and all kinds of stuff. I've gotten better at that, or worse. Kerry probably sees it as better. I don't pick up every little thing. I'll let something stay for a day or two now. But I don't know. I'm definitely going to have to instill some discipline in him like my father did, that you put things back where you got them. That'll be interesting. That'll be a challenge.

20

PLAYBOY: In Atlanta, you surprised us with the gold shoes. How are you going to top that?

JOHNSON: I've actually been sworn to secrecy by Nike. We've been working for the past couple of years on a project that is really, really exciting. And I can guarantee you that nobody is going to be disappointed.



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HEDONISM

(continued from page 89)

stories told about Hedonism II to fill a book. In fact, Chris Santilli's *The Naked Truth About Hedonism II* is a guide that dispenses practical advice and relates tales of Hedo debauchery. A few examples include:

At a lunchtime session, an activity coordinator asked a woman to state the craziest thing she had done since she arrived. Her answer: "I gave a guy a blow job." The coordinator asked the same question of the next woman. Her answer: "Watching this lady give a blow job to my husband."

During an evening of fun that began in one of the hot tubs, two swinging couples learned that the husbands worked in similar fields. In addition to enjoying a foursome, they signed a $2 million contract for a business deal.

For some people, Hedonism isn't just a place to vacation, it's a way of life. Repeat attendees make up about a third of the clientele. Some people have formed Hedo clubs, with chapters in Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia and Phoenix.

The Internet has made it possible for Hedo fans to link up with one another and stay on virtual vacation. One committed Hedophile from Nebraska has a website (dennyp.com) that has registered more than half a million visitors since starting in 1998. Here, folks who have been to Hedo can swap stories, post trip reports, submit pictures and announce their future travel plans.

With the opening of Hedonism III, much of the discussion has centered on comparing the two resorts. The online consensus so far seems to be that Hedonism II is wilder than its successor, a position articulated by Don, a Hedo veteran who has logged 13 weeks at Hedonism II and one at Hedonism III. During the wet T-shirt contest at Hedo III, he says, only four girls competed and they all kept their tops on. At Hedo II, the contestants numbered two dozen; all lost their tops, and a few had to be told to keep their bottoms on.

But DeWayne and Misty, also veterans, say, "We had as much fun or maybe even more, and the new place is nicer and just as crazy, maybe even crazier."

Perhaps the most passionate testimony comes from "Hedo virgin" Heather: "Hedo is for everyone—singles, couples, old or young, anyone who wants to let go of inhibitions and do whatever. And I mean whatever!" Speaking for herself and her girlfriends, Heather declares, "We are Hedo lifers. And we have recruited several of our friends for next year, all single, beautiful women. Watch out, Hedo III, we will be back." We're sure Hedonism will be ready for them.

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Collection Treatment *(continued from page 120)*

Audra watched the dance of the chopsticks like a burn victim watching a display of fireworks.

loud, Vic smooth and stealthy.

Sometimes, when residents passed by on their way to the stairs, Sophia would give Vic a short summary of their essential traits and character flaws. "Gambler," she decreed in a low voice when she saw the man Audra knew as 221. Vic raised his eyebrows in interest, but Sophia shook her head. "Not cards. Games. Ball games on TV."

Another resident, a stooped balding man from the third floor, evoked a snort of derision from Sophia. "This one, he keeps pictures under the mattress. Naked pictures. Like he is 12 years old."

In her corner armchair, Audra nodded silently. The man, she knew, lived in the room directly above hers. She also knew at what time he liked to look at his pictures, and the exact pitch of the responses they evoked in him. This was the sort of intimacy that the acoustics of the Aurora created.

Occasionally, Sophia and Vic would lapse into a language that Audra did not understand. She did not think she was the reason for this. Sophia now seemed to regard her as one more inanimate feature of the lobby's decor, and Vic had rarely acknowledged her existence. It was something in the flow of the conversation that seemed to make them switch back to some older, shared dialect. English was comfortable enough, expressive enough, worn and thoughtless enough for most things. But not for everything.

Vic switched to this other tongue when he first saw Will Finn. Will was on his way back from work. His hair was wind-ruffled, his stride energetic and brisk. He waved a polite greeting to all of them as he walked toward the stairs. Vic raised a languorous hand in response, his eyes following Will up and then lingering on the place where he had been. The foreign tongue emerged briefly from his mouth to touch his upper lip, followed by a sly, low stream of incomprehensible words.

Sophia seemed amused at first. Her tone echoed his own; there was no need for Audra to understand her words in order to know the sort of thing she was saying. But then she grew serious. She shook her head fiercely, causing her thick black hair to fly around her, compressing her mouth into a starched little line. No, she said, several times, in her own language. She assailed Vic with something sharp and emphatic, an order or an admonition.

Vic asked a question, smiling, cool and knowing.

"Not yet," Sophia said. After a moment, she smiled, too. Her fingers, with their pointed, white-painted nails, gestured in the air as if marking a length of time, or stroking an invisible cat.

•

For lunch, Audra frequented Eternal Bliss, the Chinese restaurant she could see from her window. She would order one of the lunch specials, which consisted mostly of rice. Although Eternal Bliss provided its customers with plastic forks, Audra chose to eat her meal with chopsticks. She would hunt down the grains of rice one by one. For hours, she would manipulate them patiently, corner them into the appropriate position and deposit them carefully in her mouth. When she finished, her plate would appear almost untouched. The patterns of her rice picking had swept over it as ineffectually as a gentle breeze blowing through a field of wheat. And yet lunch had received an apt portion of the day. She had granted it a generous amount of time and effort. The question of food, always a loud and resonant one for Audra, had been addressed.

Will Finn also occasionally ate his lunch at Eternal Bliss. The first two times that his lunch break partially overlapped hers, he had not noticed her when he came in, and Audra, tucked dimly between the kitchen and the bathroom, had done nothing to attract his attention. She watched Will study the menu, converse briefly with the waitress, return the smile she offered. He had brought a newspaper with him, and he leafed through it while he waited for his food. When the meal arrived, he folded the paper and placed it on the chair opposite him. Like Audra, he chose the chopsticks over the plastic fork. But in his hands, they were not ingenious devices of procrastination. They darted over his plate with the grace and precision of two well-practiced dancers, adept at coordinating their steps. Audra watched the dance of the chopsticks like a burn victim watching a display of fireworks. Her lips parted slightly. The slow, antlike procession of grains of rice to her mouth stopped completely.

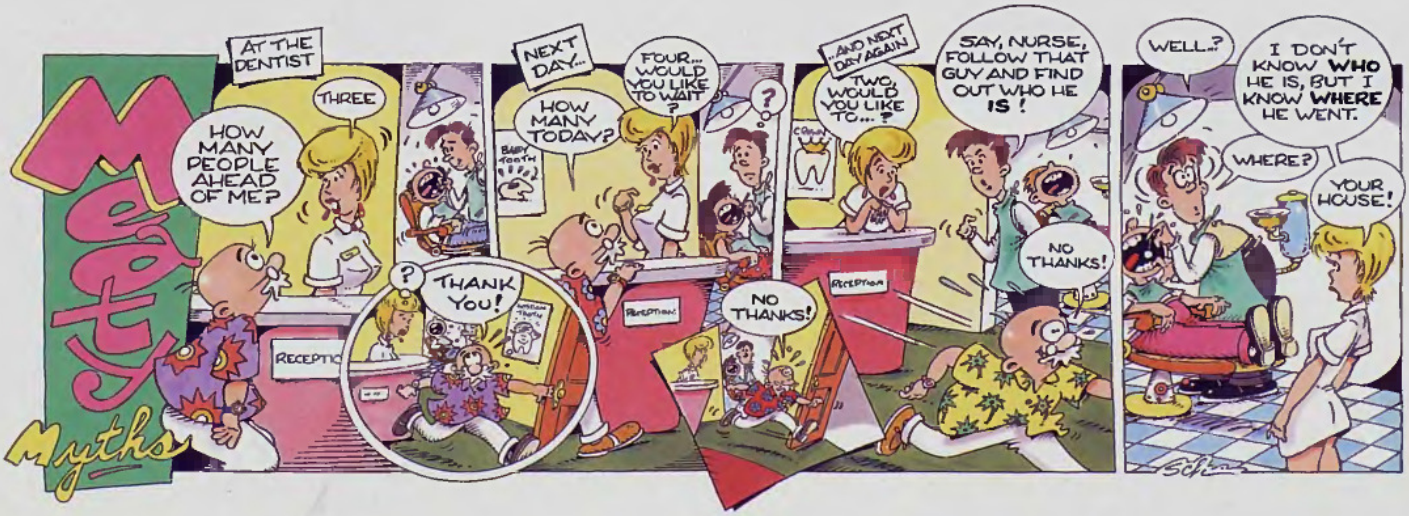
•

On the third time their visits to Eternal Bliss coincided, Will noticed Audra before she noticed him. She was sitting at one of the outside tables this time, taking in the sights and sounds of the world where she lived: a loud argument over a parking space, a street woman busily squirting her person and possessions with a large, silvery spray can, and a scruffy man dressed in layers of gray who was showering passersby with verbal abuse, with a consistency and dedication that Audra could not help admiring.

"Your boyfriend's cheating on you!" he was yelling at a girl in high heels, as Will Finn seated himself at Audra's table.

"You're taking a break, too?" he asked.

Audra made an ambiguous sound. She speared two grains of rice, squeezed them painfully between her chopsticks,



and placed them on her tongue, where she let them linger for a while.

Will nodded. "I get half an hour for lunch. There are a couple of closer places, actually, but the food is terrible."

"And the food here?" Audra asked.

"Well, the rice is OK, and so are the vegetables. I'm a little wary about the meat, so I——" The waitress arrived and Will ordered. "So I usually go with something vegetarian," he concluded, once she had left.

Audra nodded. The meat that was part of her own lunch special was piled in a little fortress of tough-looking scraps at the side of her plate. She had fished them out with her chopsticks before she had even touched her rice.

"I probably should eat more meat, though," Will said. "And more vegetables. It's a problem when you eat out a lot." He looked at Audra's plate. "You probably should, too."

"I eat what I want to eat," Audra said.

Will did not seem taken aback. "Well, sure, you can eat anything you want, but if you're thinking about your health, and what's good for your——"

"That's why I came here. So I can eat whatever I want and sleep whenever I want and not talk to anyone I don't feel like talking to."

"You did it again today, right?" The scruffy man was now following two older women carrying plastic shopping bags, who did their best to steer away as quickly as possible without breaking into an actual run. "You left the gas on. You forgot to turn it off. Right? Right?"

"Right," Will said, as if softly answering him. "So you came to the right place. Everyone does their own thing, and nobody asks questions."

"They watch you, though," Audra said. "They're still watching you."

"I don't think they're watching." Will was shaking his head slowly. "Not really. And if they are, they've probably seen it before. They don't care that much." He looked at her, seeming almost to be imploring her for a confirmation. Audra shrugged.

The waitress arrived with Will's order, just as the scruffy man found another victim, a tall, stooped man shuffling by with an uneven gait.

"It's back," he called out to him with manic glee. "You're pretending it isn't, but it is. It's going to get you this time."

The tall man continued on his way with a blank expression.

"Hank," the waitress said, "if I give you an egg roll, will you take it over to Eddie's for a while?"

The scruffy man in gray turned toward her. "Billings," he said ominously. "That's where it happened. In Billings."

"Shut up about Billings. Now you're not getting anything." She turned and went back inside.

"Is that an artist or a crazy person?"

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Audra asked.

Will stared at her uncomprehendingly for a moment. Then he remembered. "I guess it's hard to tell sometimes," he said. "Maybe neither. Maybe both." His chopsticks performed their eloquent dance with the rice as Audra watched. "When I was training for my job—my old job—I learned a little about it. Mental illness. Going crazy. Whatever. And I thought I got it. I thought I understood. But I had a very abstract kind of attitude." He paused, looking down at his glass of water and then picking it up to sip absently. "I think I might have a better sense of it now," he said quietly. "I can imagine what it might feel like."

Audra nodded, saying nothing.

"Do you want my fortune cookie?" Will's plate was nearly empty. He was already turning over the white slip of paper that the waitress had placed by his plate on a little brown tray. The cookie lay beside it.

Audra shook her head. "I never open mine. I just throw it away. I don't like opening fortune cookies."

"Well, you can open this one. Because it won't be your fortune. It'll be mine."

"I don't care about the fortunes," Audra said. "I just don't like that sound they make when you break them open."

Will shrugged, a suit-yourself shrug. He placed money on the little tray, $4 for the lunch special and a $2 tip. "I guess I'll see you back at the hotel, then." He smiled at her before he left, and Audra flashed something back, something that might have been a smile. She watched Will step out toward the road and pause at the stoplight. The man in gray was approaching him slowly. And then a small black van turned the corner and drove by, and Will Finn stepped back blindly, as if he were trying to retreat into the wall. He stumbled and almost fell, and this sudden awkwardness was so foreign that it had Audra craning forward in her seat, alert and coiled.

Will recovered his balance almost immediately. He turned back toward her with a shaky, apologetic smile. "I thought—I don't know what I thought."

His face had gone slightly whiter, all except for his lower lip, which looked unnaturally red, as if he had just bitten down on it, involuntarily and hard.

By then, the man in gray had reached him. He drew closer to Will than he had to any of the others, and Will did nothing to stop him. He seemed to be waiting for the man to reach him.

"They found you," the man said, almost kindly.

"No," said Will Finn.

The man the waitress had called Hank nodded emphatically. "They found you. They're not done with you yet."

Will Finn stepped out into the street. A passing car honked at him and screeched to an unnecessarily abrupt stop. Will gestured to the driver, apologizing or perhaps thanking her for not running him over, and hurried to cross to the other side.

Audra watched him until he was gone. This happened much more quickly than when she was looking down on him from her second-floor window. When she could no longer see him, she played with the rice on her plate for a while, but she had lost interest in the chopstick game.

After a moment, she picked up the fortune cookie. Holding it well away from her, as if defusing a bomb, she cracked it open with one determined motion of her thumbs, wincing as she did, wincing again at the dry, slithery worm whisper the tiny slip of paper inside the cookie emitted as she extracted it.

"Friends long absent are coming back to you" was what the fortune said. This message was typed between two small, blue, round faces, both smiling widely.

•

Audra was not expecting any visits from long-absent friends. She had never had many friends, anyway, though there had been some girls she had been friendly with. She had met most of these girls in hospitals and had become friendly with them because they had a lot in common. Together, they schemed and complained and compared notes and tactics. Silently, fiercely, they competed, using one another's fluctuations to assess their own progress, like balancing weights on an old-fashioned scale. Some of these girls were now dead, but Audra was not expecting any visits from the live ones either. These were not the sort of girls who tended to keep in touch.

In fact, except for the occasional check from her parents, there was not much to connect Audra to the place she had come from. She liked the idea of traveling light. Except for her basic wardrobe, all of which could be fitted into her one floppy blue denim bag, there were only a few prized possessions.

Audra unzipped her bag and took these out shortly after she returned from her long lunch at Eternal Bliss. Some of

the prized possessions were mementos from home. They had heavy, ornamental handles decorated with small, dainty flowers, and smart, reliable blades. The others, in their little plastic bottles, were less impressive at first sight. But they made a friendly, welcoming rattling sound as Audra held them affectionately in her hands, eggs from which chicks might someday hatch, warm and comfortingly heavy with potential.

•

"I have a letter for you," Sophia Croff told Will Finn as he passed through the lobby on his way toward the stairs.

From her habitual chair in the corner, Audra had a good view of Will's face as he received the news. The familiar clearness of his features was unmarred as he shook his head.

"Must be a mistake. It's probably for the previous occupant."

"It has your name on it. Look." Sophia waited until Will stepped closer, closer still. Then she rose and languidly produced the letter from one of the deep pockets of the wine-colored wool cardigan she was wearing. Will held out his hand, but Sophia was not ready to relinquish the letter just yet. She extended a precise fingernail to underline the name of the addressee. "William Finn. That is you, right?"

Will nodded. "That's my name, but I didn't give this address to——" He grew abruptly silent, his forehead nearly touching Sophia's as they conferred over the letter. "Could I see that, please?"

"It is from——" Sophia tilted the letter with a leisurely gesture. "Professional Recovery Services. Do you know who that is?"

"Can I see the letter please, Sophia?"

To Audra, it appeared as if Will finally had to tug the letter forcefully out of Sophia's hand. He looked down at it and nodded once. "Thanks," he said, and turned back toward the stairs, holding the letter in his left hand.

"Aren't you going to open it?" Sophia asked innocently, still standing in the place where he had left her.

"Later," he said without turning back, his voice muffled, as if, by some typical trick of the Aurora's acoustics, it was arriving from another floor, somewhere far above or below them.

"Recovery." Sophia repeated the word to herself. "Do you think he is sick?"

It took Audra several moments to figure out that the question was directed at her. Sophia was not looking in her direction, but still facing the stairs, which were now empty. Will had that effect on people, Audra had noticed; something of him seemed to linger behind even after he was gone.

"He looks pretty healthy to me," she told Sophia.

"That's true, but you can't always tell, right?" Sophia's profile crinkled in perturbation or distaste. "Sometimes, they look all right on the outside, but on the inside——" she rolled her shoulders in an expressive gesture. "What can you do, then?"

"You can stay away from them," Audra said.

Sophia turned toward her. "*You* can, maybe," she said after a moment. Then she laughed, long and jagged, like feathers being ruffled the wrong way.

•

The next day was grim and windy, and Will Finn, in his T-shirt and shorts, looked newly vulnerable. He did not hunch his shoulders or put his arms around his body to protect himself from the cold, but Audra, vigilant at her second-story post, sensed a new acknowledgment of the weather in his stance. The winds could sway him more easily now, the rain could penetrate the veneer of his thin clothes, the frost could sink long, yellow, numbing teeth into the perfectly formed toes Audra imagined flexing in his white sneakers. He jogged in place for the customary five minutes, causing Audra to nod once in approval; she was fond of routines, particularly this routine. But then, instead of turning right, he paused suddenly on the sidewalk, his head jerking sharply to look up and down the street. Then, in a swift move marked by the inelegance of an abrupt decision, he turned left at the corner of Fairfax Street, causing Audra to lose sight of him almost immediately.

•

She was not surprised to discover that Sophia had chosen that particular day as appropriate for changing Will's sheets. Audra was alerted to her presence on the floor by the distinct jangle of keys, just beyond the bend in the corridor, shortly after nine in the morning. Audra gave her several minutes, then wandered outside her own room, not bothering to close the door after her.

Sophia had not bothered to close the door to Will's room, either. The pale green sheets and pillowcases that provided justification for her presence (although she clearly did not expect to have to justify her presence to anyone) were strewn in a careless pile on Will's neatly made bed. Sophia was standing by the window, squinting at Will's letter. She looked up in irritation at the faint squeal that the door emitted as Audra entered the room.

"What do you want?" She sounded weary more than angry, a woman used to negotiations and compromises.

Audra shrugged. "Thought I'd see if you needed any help here. With the sheets." Sophia did not deem this worthy of more than a brief snort. She stared down at the letter for a while longer. Then she thrust it brusquely at Audra. "I

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don't understand this. I don't speak this language."

Audra looked down at the printed page. The letters were slightly smudged, somehow unclean. Will's name and address, including his room number, were printed at the top. The letter opened abruptly, without even the most superficial display of cordiality. "Despite repeated demands on our part," it read, "you have yet to settle your outstanding debt to our client's satisfaction. Any additional delay in settling said debt will result in our proceeding with further collection treatment. Please contact our office within the next seven days in order to——"

Sophia snatched the letter from Audra's hand again. "It is about money, yes?" she said more than asked.

Audra shook her head slowly. "I don't speak this language, either."

"Money," Sophia said again, more confidently. She bent her head to study the letter again. Audra watched a dense smile bubble to the surface of her face. Sophia looked up, but Audra's gaze did not waver. After a moment, Sophia refolded the letter, returned it to its envelope and placed the envelope on the low, round table. She studied the envelope briefly, turned it over and nodded, satisfied. Then she turned toward Audra again and gestured with her chin toward Will Finn's bed.

"You wanted to help with the sheets? So help with the sheets."

For a long while after Sophia had left the room, Audra continued to stand in place, very still. When she moved, her joints shifted into gear with a creak of protest that seemed to echo momentously in Will's empty room. She knelt down next to the bed, sorting through the pale green linen with cautious, skeptical hands. It did not seem particularly dirty, nor particularly fresh. Attached to one of the sheets, she found a little tag that said "St. Mary's" in someone's neat cursive handwriting. Audra let the pale green sheet fall from her hands. She hoisted herself up to sit on the bed, and leaned over to take Will's pillow. The intimacy of slipping her hand between pillow and pillowcase filled her head with a momentary dizziness. She stripped the pillow slowly, gently, as if it were a fragile, bashful creature.

When Will Finn entered his room about two hours later, the bed was made. Audra was standing by the table, idly running her finger along the edge of the envelope from Professional Recovery Services, which had been opened in a precise, straight line, probably with a knife. Will Finn stared for a moment.

"I took half a day off from work," he said, as if it was his own presence, and not hers, that required an explanation. "I told them I thought I was coming down with something."

•

"It's a girl. A woman," he corrected himself. "She was more of a girl when I met her. And it's not about money. She thinks—she feels I made her a promise and broke it. She's saying I misled her."

"Did you?" Audra asked.

"Not intentionally." Will paused. "I never promised her anything explicitly. I never meant to. But I think I understand now how she could have interpreted it that way. Although I'm not sure what I could have done differently, without being cruel in another way. I apologized. More than once. But that's not enough. That's not what she wants."

"What does she want?"

Will Finn shook his head. "She hired this agency, and . . . they won't leave me alone. I had to leave my job. My friends, my apartment, the city where I was living. I thought they would be satisfied. But they're not. She's not." His eyes, which had been fixed on the envelope lying in his lap, turned to Audra briefly. "I can't give her what she wants. I can't." He looked down again, turning the envelope in his hands. "And . . . I've got nothing left now. Nothing."

Audra's eyes surveyed him starkly. "You don't know what nothing is."

"You're right," Will said immediately. "I shouldn't be talking like that. There are people living on the streets out there——"

Audra shook her head impatiently. "I'm not talking about that. I'm not talking about *things*."

"What, then?"

Audra shrugged. "About nothing," she said softly. "That's what I'm talking about. Nothing."

"I don't know what you mean," Will said, resigned.

Audra nodded. "Right."

A joyless half-smile flicked across Will's face. He rose from the floor, where he had been sitting beside her, leaning against the bed, to survey the room. "I was going to just pack everything and get out of here," he told her. "That's why I left work early. I can be packed and gone in 20 minutes. It won't be a problem to find another hotel."

Go, said a silent voice in Audra's throat loudly. Leave. Run. It works, at least for a while.

Somewhere lower, blind and mindless, something clenched violently.

What she said, impassive, was, "What for? If they found you once, they'll find you again."

Will nodded, and the weight of the gesture seemed to move through him like a bolt of gravity, seating him heavily on the bed, bending his head, trimming away at his vitality like the shears of an efficient gardener.

•

When she did not close her door completely at night, the crack between the door and the frame let the light of the hall's nighttime illumination into Audra's room. On the evening of her conversation with Will Finn, shortly after 10 o'clock, it also let in the sound of Sophia's return to the second floor. In her off-duty hours, Sophia wore clogs with

"You're so good. It's hard to believe you're self-taught."

wooden soles that made an emphatic sound against the thin carpet in the halls. Audra traced the advance of the clogs as they drew nearer and then passed her room without pausing. She noted the exact moment when the clogs turned the corner of the corridor.

"You are awake?" Sophia asked, somewhere beyond the corner, as she knocked loudly and turned the knob at the same time. The reply was muffled by the creak of the closing door.

In her own room, Audra was lying on her back, one wrist tucked under her head. This pose was beginning to affect her circulation. The blood hummed and tingled in protest as it tried to make its way to her hand and fingers. A similar, speedier effect could be achieved with a rubber band, or a clothespin.

Audra was thinking about Will Finn's bed. Although the bed was essentially no different from her own, Audra had had a sort of vision about it as she was changing Will's sheets earlier that day. She had seen herself lying in Will's bed, on her back, as she was lying now, her hair streaming out around her, sleeping in a way she could never remember actually sleeping. It was a Snow White sleep, placid and dreamless. It was the sort of sleep you sank into effortlessly, with no external aids or internal tactics. It was the sort of sleep you had to be shaken out of, and even that might not do the trick. It was so still, so sweet, you might never want to wake up again.

No sleep of any sort seemed to be awaiting her now. Restless, Audra rose and slipped out into the corridor. The perfunctory carpet rasped against her bare feet. The Aurora seemed to shimmer with a heavier, nocturnal breathing. Outside the door to Will Finn's room, the abandoned wooden clogs lay suspended in a small victory dance, one of them pointing straight ahead, the other tilted drunkenly on its side.

Audra raised the still-pulsing hand that had been trapped behind her head and brought it closer to her eyes. In the dim, bluish light, it was impossible to see if the hand showed any signs of the little adventure it had undergone. But the blood was keenly felt, rushing urgently to reassert itself, buzzing warmly like something live. So much blood, flooding the tips of her fingers. Despite her best efforts, still, so much flesh and blood.

•

The smell in the lobby almost drove Audra away as soon as she entered. A thick, red, meaty smell, made even more obscene by the thin, mocking camouflage of spices. Its source, she saw, drawing closer almost despite herself, were the plates that Sophia and Vic were holding in their laps. But in the static space of the insulated lobby, it was everywhere. The air itself seemed weighed down with near-visible particles of the plump pinkish slabs and the clotted brown sauce which coated them. Breathing through her mouth, as sparingly as if the air were being filtered through a thin tube inserted between her lips, Audra made her way to her usual armchair.

"I'm always hungry," Sophia was saying to Vic, dismissing some earlier comment of his with a wave of her hand and the fork it was holding.

"But more hungry today," he insisted, placid.

"No."

"Yes." Vic's teeth revealed themselves briefly underneath his black mustache, sharp, white and carnivorous. "You feast at night, you will be hungry in the daytime."

"You know me." Sophia's tongue flicked out to lash at a drop of brown sauce suspended at the corner of her lips. "I have feasts in the night, I have feasts in the day. . . ."

"But this is different. This is . . . young blood." With no warning, Vic turned toward Audra and smiled, as if something in this comment had suddenly incited him to notice her at last, perhaps even to invite her to partake in the conversation. She retreated into her chair as far as she could. In Vic's lap, the heavy meat sizzled silently with an obscene pink leer. "It gives you a good appetite, yes?"

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WHERE & HOW TO BUY

To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 42, 51–52, 92–93, 98–103 and 183, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.

WIRED

Page 42: "Wizard for Sale": **Software** from 989 Studios, by *Sony Computer*, 800-345-7669. By *EA*, 800-245-4525. "Minidisc Goes MP3": **Minidisc players:** By *Sony Electronics*, 800-222-7669. By *Sharp Electronics*, 800-237-4277. **Software and adapter** by Voquette, 877-432-8346. "Game of the Month": **Software** by *Crave*, 970-392-7022. "Wild Things": **Digital audio player, accelerometer, digital watch and compass and two-way radio** by *Nike*, 800-344-6453.

MANTRACK

Page 51: "The Royal Thing": **Royal Scotsman train ride** from *Abercrombie and Kent International*, 800-323-7308. "The Sound of Silence": **Headphones** by *Bose*, 800-650-BOSE. Page 52: "Brave New World Wineglasses": **Stemware** by *Riedel*, 800-642-1859. "Gourmet Pizza": *New Pizza* published by *Chronicle Books*, at bookstores or chronbooks.com. "Guys Are Talking About": **Energy drink** by *Jones Soda*, at beverage retailers or fusion.com. *Hanging Out in Europe* published by *IDG Books Worldwide*, at bookstores or www.idgbooks.com.

CRAZY HAND JIVE

Pages 92–93: "Palm Readings": **Handheld computers:** By *Hewlett-Packard*, 800-552-8500. By *Casio*, 800-962-2746. By *Vtech*, 800-835-8023. By *Compaq*, 800-282-6672. By *Handspring*, 888-565-9393. By *Palm*, 800-881-7256. **Digital camera** by *Kodak*, 800-242-2424. **Electronic compass** by *Precision Navigation*, 800-422-6672. **Global positioning satellite receiver** by *Rand McNally*, 800-275-7263. **Voice recorder** by *Landware*, 800-526-3977. **Keyboard** by *Palm*, 800-881-7256. **Modem** by *OmniSky*, 800-860-5767. **E-mail** by *Pocketmail*, 877-762-5382. "More Palm Prints": **Modem, digital camera and storage modules** by *Handspring*, 888-565-9393. **Digital cell phone** by *Qualcomm*, 877-319-1807. "The Pocket PC Competition": **Handheld computer** by *Microsoft*, 800-426-9400. "Other Cool Handhelds": **Digital cell phone** by *Neopoint*, 877-636-4447. **Two-way pager** by *Motorola*, 800-548-9954.

FASHION

Page 98: **Jacket and shirt** by *Emporio Armani*, 877-736-7674. Page 99: **Shirt** by *Van Heusen*, 212-381-3500. **Pants** by *Nautica*, 877-NAUTICA. **Socks** by *Gold Toe*, 800-523-8265. **Shoes** by *Johnston and Murphy*, 888-792-3272. **Shirt and pants** by *Ralph Lauren*, 800-377-7656. **Shirt and vest** by *DKNY*, 800-986-DKNY. **Corduroys** by *Gap*, at Gap stores. **Sneakers** by *Nike*, 800-344-6453. Page 100: **Shirts and shorts** by *Hugo Boss*, 800-HUGO-BOSS. **Sneakers** by *Nike*, 800-344-6453. **Sweatshirt** by *Ralph Lauren*, 800-377-7656. **Nylon pants** by *Emporio Armani*, 877-736-7674. **Long-sleeve T and nylon pants** *by Calvin Klein*, 800-294-7978. **Sneakers** by *Fila*, 800-PRO-FILA. **Pants and shirt** by *Tommy Jeans*, at select department stores. **Wool hat** by *Gap*, at Gap stores. **Sweater vest** by *Gene Meyer*, 800-446-6636. **Her pants and sandals** by *BCBG*, 888-636-BCBG. **T-shirt** by *Fila*, 800-PRO-FILA. **Shirt** by *Ralph Lauren*, 800-377-7656. **Her jeans and leather jacket** by *Tommy Jeans*, at select department stores. **Sticks and equipment** by *Warrior Lacrosse* and **apparel and custom sticks** by *Lacrosse Unlimited*, 800-366-LAXX. Page 101: **Shirt** by *Tommy Hilfiger* and **vest** by *Tommy Jeans*, at select department stores. **Jeans** by *Levi's*, 800-872-5384. **Sweater** by *BCBG*, 888-636-BCBG. **Vest, jeans, shirt and jacket** *by Calvin Klein*, 800-294-7978. Page 102: **Hooded sweatshirt and sweatpants** by *Nike*, 800-344-6453. **Mesh shirt and pants** by *Fila*, 800-PRO-FILA. **Hooded shell and jacket** by *Nautica*, 877-NAUTICA. **Windbreaker** by *Nike*, 800-344-6453. Page 103: **Boxer shorts:** By *Abercrombie and Fitch*, 800-666-2545. By *Brooks Brothers*, 800-348-2058. By *Adidas*, 800-677-6638.

ON THE SCENE

Page 183: "Divers' Pleasures": **Watches:** By *Panerai*, from Piaget, 800-628-4344. By *Seiko*, 800-782-2510. By *Swatch*, 800-879-2824. By *Audemars Piguet*, *Blancpain* and *Omega*, from Swiss FineTiming Atelier Jewelers, 1900 Sheridan Road, Highland Park, IL 60035, 847-266-7900.

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Sophia laughed. "Why are you asking me? You know all about young blood. You are the expert."

Vic acknowledged this with a modest bow of his head. His darkly shining eyes had flicked back toward Audra again. "Do you have any food for your little guest?" he asked Sophia.

"What?" She stared at him blankly until he projected a lazy thumb toward Audra.

"I don't want any," Audra said, shaking her head emphatically. For a moment, she had forgotten to breathe through her mouth, and the smell assailed her again, making her head spin with a thrust of nausea as vivid as a stroke of lightning between her eyes.

"I don't feed the guests," Sophia said, sounding disgusted by the very idea. "The guests can feed themselves."

"You feed me."

"I give you——" Sophia groped for the word. "Leftovers." She nodded, pleased. "When I am done with it, you can have it."

"Really?" Vic smiled, leaning forward in his seat.

"Maybe." Sophia rolled her shoulders, suddenly petulant.

Audra could feel Vic's eyes following her as she rose to leave, taking care to maintain her distance from both of them, as if expecting a sudden jab from one of their forks.

"Do you starve all of them like that?" he asked as she was leaving the room.

Audra did not catch the low murmur of Sophia's answer.

"No," Vic said in reply. "It's good. I like it."

•

Will Finn was late the next morning, a fact which Audra took almost as a personal insult. She had, after all, been standing by her window and waiting for him for nearly half an hour. When he arrived, at last, at five to eight, the renewed familiarity of him was enough to soothe her for a while. She surveyed him closely as he stood jogging just outside the Aurora, the white T-shirt clinging damply to the small of his back, the gray-blue socks climbing smartly up his ankles, the fair hair framing his face with careless ease, ruffled occasionally by the wind. Everything seemed to be in place. If Audra did sense a brief, atypical jerkiness in his motions, it was gone by the time he set off for his run along the usual track. Her eyes followed him for as long as they could track him, past Eternal Bliss, the St. Elliott, the closed doors of a bar called Ken's Den. Will was running smoothly. He turned his head sharply toward the road once, twice at the most.

Audra herself was not quite back on track. The smells and echoes of yesterday lingered heavily somewhere in her sinus cavities. She did not go out for

lunch. Instead, she plunged into her stash of prized possessions and picked out several pills with careful, loving care. Once the selection had been completed, she let them nestle in her hand for a while. The hand was cool and dry; the pills did not grow damp or sticky. One by one, she put them in her mouth and sucked on them slowly. The bitterness was good; it pervaded her gradually, like a stream of cold air filtering into a large space. Audra could feel it coating her body from the inside with a thin insulating layer of acrid frosting. Everything on the outside grew dimmer and less urgent. This was how she passed the next two days, in a dim, cool, bitter haze.

By the afternoon of the third day, she was ready to venture out to the lobby again. Sophia was there, alone, watching TV; the set was radiating a consistent soundtrack of self-indulgent laughter. Sophia was not laughing.

"Where I come from," she said, seeming to direct her comment toward a larger audience than just Audra, perched in her pale green armchair, "if you talk to your parents like that, they slap you. Like this." She thwacked the side of the couch expressively.

"I'm glad I don't live where you come from," Audra said.

Sophia made a sound, which seemed to convey something like "you should be." For a while, they watched the show in silence.

Will Finn came in as the titles were rolling. He wandered toward them, pausing uncertainly just outside the frayed carpet that marked the boundaries of the lobby. "It's raining," he said, and Audra noticed the wet lashes crisscrossing his buttondown shirt.

Sophia gestured him closer with an intimate flick of her wrist. "Next time, you tell me when you invite the phone company here, right?" she said, making the words sound flirtatious, like a secret lovers' code.

"What?" Will's forehead was briefly creased. His glance wandered to Audra, as if expecting an explanation.

"Those people from the phone company were here. To install your line."

"To install my line," Will repeated.

"Right." Sophia leaned forward in her seat. Her hand reached out to touch Will's jaw lingeringly. "It's all right," she said, soft and somehow lewdly maternal. "You can have a phone, if you are staying for a while. But you should let me know, yes?"

"Yes," Will said. Then he turned and went upstairs.

Audra waited through the commercials and the next show's theme song before following him. The door of his room was open, as if he were waiting for her, or someone else. Will was standing by the round table; his cassette cases were neatly arranged around the empty space where the tape deck used to stand.

"Look," he told Audra, handing her one of the cases.

Audra looked. The cassette was still in its box. She was momentarily distracted by the sight of Will's handwriting, detailing its content in clear, legible script. It took her a moment to notice that the actual magnetic tape had been meticulously removed from the cassette. It was now no more than a useless plastic shell.

"They're all like that?"

Will nodded. He wandered over to the other side of the room and knelt by the bed, lifting the edge of the cover up to look under it. "They took the books, too," he commented matter-of-factly. "And I had some letters, and a kind of journal here——" he kneeled lower, making sure. "They took those, too."

"They didn't take the TV," Audra observed. She turned it on, then immediately off again.

"Right," Will said with a smile Audra had no way of interpreting.

"They left you another letter," she told him. She had just noticed it, lying on top of the previous one.

Will walked over to the table, and with an understated, economic gesture, tore the unopened letter from Professional Recovery Services once, then twice, then three times.

"It doesn't matter anymore," he told Audra. "They can have whatever they want now. I don't care. I don't."

Audra nodded her acceptance of this.

Will smiled his indecipherable smile again. "Actually," he said softly, "I'd almost like to see them try. I'd almost like to see them try and take anything from me from now on."

•

Standing at her window, facing the bustling, empty street at 7:30 A.M., and then at 7:45, and then at 8:00, Audra resolved to start getting up later. This was not an effortless feat. Her body was accustomed to its own rhythms. At 7:00, invisible springs would snap her eyes open like a china doll's. A futile, relentless nervous energy would course through her with an almost audible humming, urging her up, out of bed, into coiled, alert verticality. But Audra was used to overruling her body's sporadic displays of willpower; this was, after all, only the last battle in a long, ongoing, bloody war which Audra was used to winning. She knew all the tricks. She played dirty. When necessary, she was more than prepared to use unconventional warfare, biological and chemical weapons of all kinds. Gradually, she extended the duration of her night into previously unknown realms: 8:30, 9:00 A.M. and beyond, into the dim sheltered brightness of winter noons, sun straining weakly against the clouds like something left waiting too long.

Perhaps, in his room beyond the corner, Will Finn was also adjusting his

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circadian rhythms. Brushing her hair by the window one morning, a short time after 10:00, Audra saw him returning from his run. Will paused before entering the Aurora, jogging in place, breathing heavily, squinting as if the light were hurting his eyes. Audra opened her door and ventured out to the corridor to wait for him.

Will seemed glad to see her. "Hi," he said. "I wasn't sure you were still here. I haven't seen you in a while."

Audra examined him briefly, noting no obvious physical changes. "Aren't you going to be late for work?" she asked.

"I'm not working anymore," Will said.

Audra nodded, casual. "What about money? The rent and stuff like that?"

"I'm not paying rent anymore, either," Will said, trying for matter-of-factness but falling short along the way. He looked at Audra, shrugged, looked down, smiled, touched her shoulder in a brief, friendly gesture of parting, then walked past her on his way to his own room.

Audra remained in the corridor for a moment longer, listening. She listened as if she could take in the whole of the Aurora with a single tilt of her head, determine exactly how many people were present at a given moment, identify which of them were in their rooms and which were not, pinpoint the location of any person she was looking for. In fact, it was a while before she managed to find Sophia. She had to traverse the whole second floor and part of the third before she found her in room 312, smoking one of the absent tenant's cigarettes.

"He leaves chocolate in his drawers," Sophia told her when she turned to see Audra standing in the doorway, as if continuing a conversation that had been briefly interrupted. "There will be ants everywhere. Look."

Audra looked. There was, indeed, a half-unwrapped bar of chocolate lying in one of the drawers, nestled between the man's yellowy-white undershirts. Sophia nodded once and blew an emphatic stream of smoke in the general direction of the window, as if she had just been vindicated.

"So what about those no-rent deals?" Audra said.

Sophia turned toward her, raising an eyebrow, waiting.

"You think I could get me one of those?" Audra asked. "Somewhere?"

Sophia's eyes mapped her slowly, from the dusky toes of her bare feet, to her brittle, breakable ankles, the thin hollow tubes of her legs, her bony torso, twiggy arms covered by ribbed black cloth, eyes staring too directly from a raw, stark face under dull, dark hair.

"You could try," Sophia said with a small shrug, managing to convey quite eloquently exactly what she thought Audra's chances of success were.

•

The last time Audra saw Will Finn was a grimy, hooded dawn. Something had sparked her awake, shooting forth from the rumbling core of hollow that she had been nurturing more intensely in the past few weeks, like a small flame feeding on the marrow of her bones. In the early light, she was suddenly buoyant and wide-awake. The feverish haze of the last few days grew fiercely animating, like a new form of energy, propelling her out of bed and toward the window.

The mood of the street seemed as foreign as her own. The stores and restaurants were still closed, their iron shutters looking like heavy lids gummed shut by the thick, gray light. Two tall, dark men were conducting a negotiation of some sort outside Eddie's, seeming unnaturally placid and leisurely. In the recessed doorway of Ken's Den, a figure muffled by numerous layers of cloth lay sprawled on the ground like a giant cocoon. On the opposite sidewalk, Will Finn was walking toward the Aurora with slow, cautious steps. Audra watched him draw closer. Then, silent as a ghost in the oversize gray sweatshirt and white cotton shorts she slept in, she left her room and glided down the stairs.

Will's face was covered with a fine layer of sandy stubble. His white shirt was creased as if he had slept in it, but his eyes were shining with an almost painful wakefulness. His hair was springing stiffly from the back of his head, as if it had recently undergone some shock. His steps were tentative, as though, under his feet, the ground were performing a demanding, hungry dance. Examining

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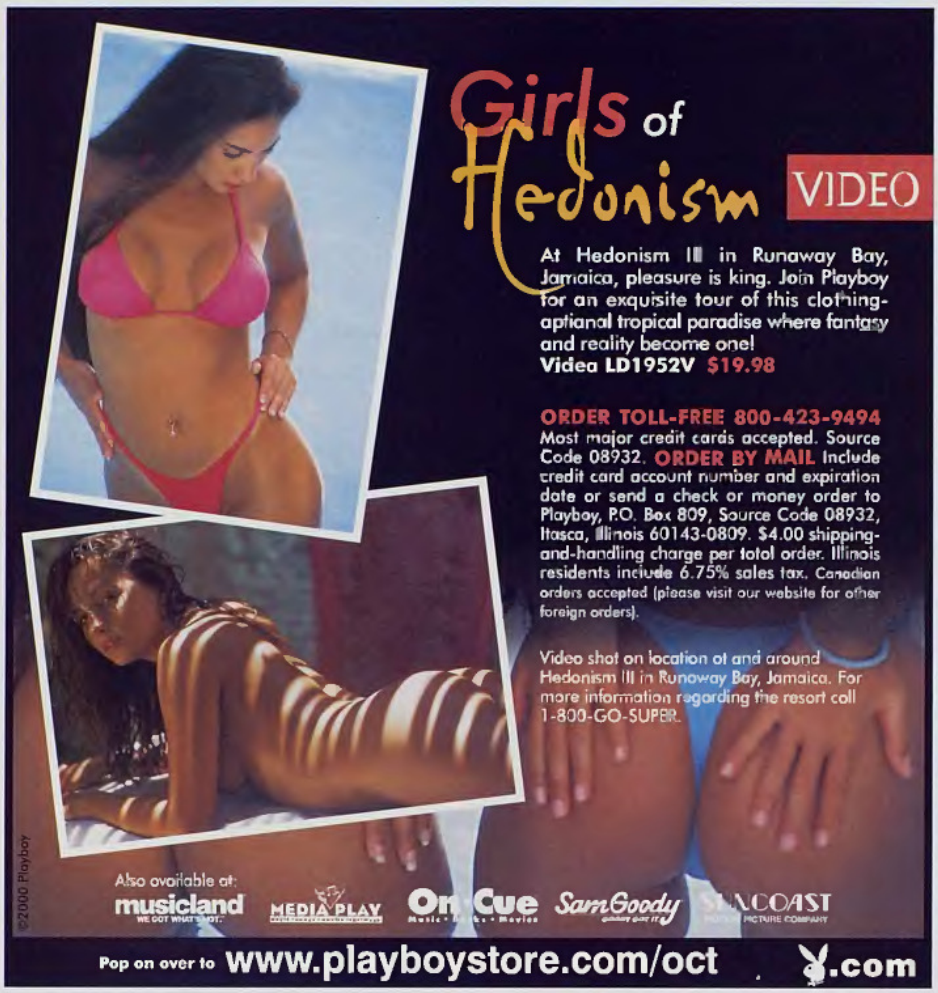
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him slowly, exhaustively, Audra experienced a brief spurt of perverse, malevolent hope, like a deep pinprick just below her collarbone. And because she knew it did not truly matter, because she had grown used to speaking her mind, she explained it to Will.

"You look like I feel," she told him.

"Right now?" Will asked, his eyes careening momentarily before they focused on her face.

"All the time," Audra said. "Like I feel all the time."

"Poor you," Will said, his voice tender, commiserating. Audra shrugged. "Do you mind if we sit down?" he asked. She shook her head. The concrete steps of the Aurora were comfortingly cold and hard beneath the thin fabric of her shorts. Beside her, Will was distantly, quietly warm. His arms were wrapped around his knees.

"I was at a party," he said after a while. "It was really . . . long. Really long." He rubbed his hand across his eyes. "Do you know that guy Vic? Sophia's friend?"

"I've met him a couple of times," Audra said. She waited, but Will said no more. Together, they watched the scruffy human cocoon on the other side of the road lumber to its feet with a single flap of dark wings and stalk heavily down the road.

"You know what?" Will said. "I never asked you what kind of artist you were."

Audra considered this for a moment. "I'm——I think it's called a body artist?" She had heard the phrase a while back and had liked it immediately, though, until hearing Will's question, she had never linked it to herself.

Will nodded, seeming satisfied. They were sitting in companionable silence when the black van pulled up next to them with a loud screech of its brakes. Neither of them moved as its two front doors opened simultaneously to discharge two triangular, bullet-headed men, whose lack of expression was so similar they could have been brothers.

Will rose slowly as one of the men strode toward him. The other lingered behind to open the back door of the van. As Audra watched, a woman emerged from the vehicle in a graceful sequence of black, heeled pumps. The sleek bob of her hair trembled prettily as she strode toward Will Finn, whose arm was now in the hold of one of the blank-faced men.

"Beat it, lady," the man said, turning back toward Audra, just as his associate said, "Scram, kid."

Audra did neither. Instead, she rose and followed Will and the first man as they commenced to meet the woman from the van halfway.

The woman stepped closer, closer still, until Audra could feel the heat of the woman's breath on Will's face. Berry-flesh lipstick and bruised eye shadow had been draped over the youthfulness of her face like a veil. Her eyes were

PLAYBOY ORIGINAL

PLAYMATE HOSTS

Kerissa Fare
Miss September

Nichole Van Croft
Miss October

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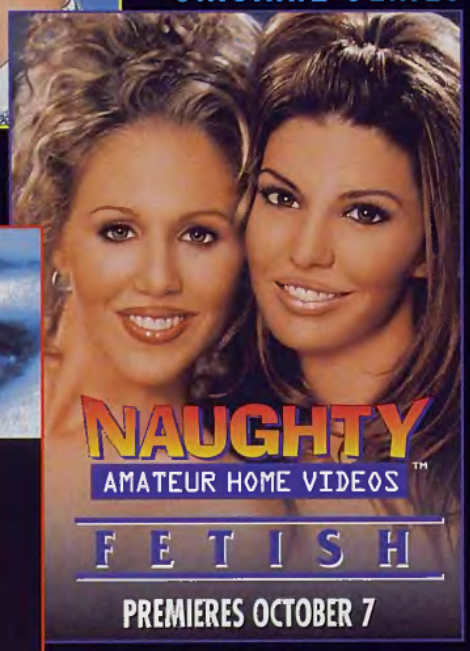
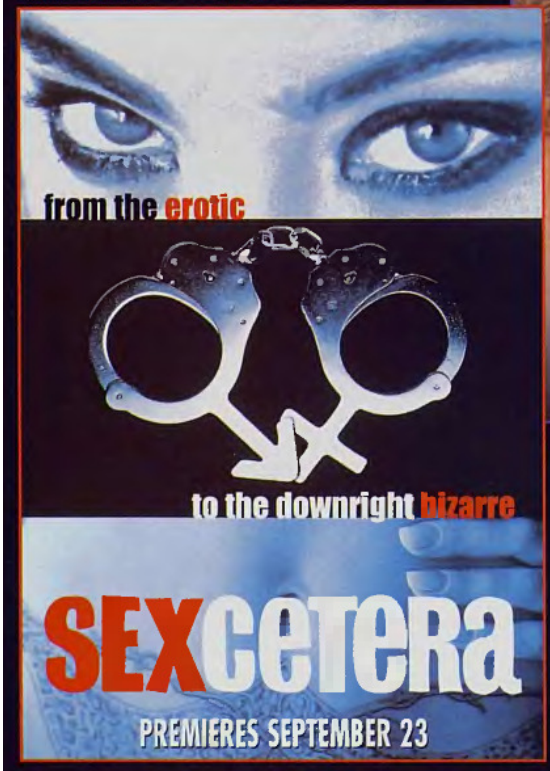


ORIGINAL SERIES



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NAUGHTY AMATEUR HOME VIDEOS - FETISH – Americans film their objects of desire — feet, leather and more. October 7, 11, 13, 16, 17, 19, 27

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bright as a broken bottle catching the sun. They flickered toward Audra, then, with thoughtless dismissal, turned back toward Will.

"You owe me," she said, her voice jagged and unappeasable. "You still owe me. You do." She stepped back, turning to the second man, who was still standing beside her. "Go on. Do it."

Audra approached Will as the two men flanked him. By now, it seemed, she truly had become invisible. Neither of the bullet-headed men uttered any objection. No reflection of her presence could be found in Will Finn's eyes.

The first man peered into Will's face, shaking him, almost experimentally. Will's expression was impassive, his body limp and unresisting. The man exchanged a brief glance with his partner, then turned toward the woman, whose stance was taut with hungry expectation.

"It's no good," he said flatly.

"What do you mean, it's no good?" She tossed her head wildly, impatiently.

"I mean, it's no use. There's no point doing it now. Someone's already collected here. There's nothing left."

The second man nodded in confirmation. He had already let go of Will and was wiping his hands clean in a weary, disgusted gesture. "He's right. Look for yourself if you don't believe us."

Her mouth pursed in a thin, crimson line of frustration, the woman drew closer, as the two men stepped out of her way. Audra, too, stepped forward, unhindered, unnoticed. She watched the woman station herself just opposite Will, her face hovering so close to his that, for a moment, it seemed as if she was going to kiss him. But she did not touch him. For a long, dead moment, her eyes bore into his. Then she nodded slowly.

"OK," she said softly. "That's it, then. We're even now."

•

In the dusky comfort of her room, Audra unpacked her prized possessions and assembled them on the bed around her. The last few weeks had diminished their ranks considerably, and even the ones that remained were reduced in potency, birthday presents that had been unwrapped and displayed too often.

Audra picked up one of the little pill bottles, shook it softly, returned it to its place. She replaced it with one of the ornamental knives. Shifting up the thick gray sleeve of her sweatshirt, she applied the knife in a single, deft stroke. The resulting line blossomed like a new, tentative branch, sprouting, red and raw, from a gnarled old trunk. Its precise, elegant curve was as gentle as that of an embryo, or a question mark. Audra sat and stared at it for the longest time.

Nathaniel Liederbach of the University of Colorado at Boulder won second place in the contest for Icons. The three third-prize winners are Paul Durica of Denison University, Barry Matthews of Cornell University and Matthew McIntosh of the Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa.

"I've given your case a lot of thought. Fifty-seven-hundred dollars' worth so far."

living online

(continued from page 44)

mentally ill dipsomaniac, or *Hidden Celebrity Webcam*, where you can witness Martha Stewart cussing like a character from a Tarantino movie.

MOTHER NATURE'S WORST TEMPER TANTRUMS

In the past two decades, there have been 44 U.S. weather catastrophes that have topped $1 billion in damages. The Billion Dollar U.S. Weather Disasters page (**www.ncdc.noaa.gov/ol/reports/billionz.html**), maintained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, chronicles the deadliest blizzards, floods, hailstorms, hurricanes, heat waves and tornadoes since 1980. Interestingly, 86 percent of the disasters have occurred since 1988, seven of which happened in 1998. Does this indicate global warming? Ice age? Both? Looks like we're in for some heavy weather.

MY NEIGHBORS' SEX

Peter lives alone in an apartment. His neighbors have noisy sex almost every day. They bang the walls. They scream. They scare his cat. Peter can't sleep. To keep from going insane, Peter maintains a website that describes—in detail—his neighbors' sex. Thursday, June 22, 2000: "The headboard was pounding a steady rhythm, with slight moans/yelps from the girl." June 20: "Girl: You squirted on me first. Guy: You did. Girl: No. You said you wanted to squirt on my face. Guy: You liked it. Girl: The first time. Guy: So, I did it again. So what." Peter acts as if he's exasperated by his neighbors' nocturnal frolics, but I suspect that he might be a little bit jealous. Read more about the sex Peter's neighbors have at **gweezlebur.com/~peter/neighborsex.html.**

QUICK HITS

Bone up on your anatomy at **www.eSkeletons.org.** . . . Decorate your pad with coffin furniture from **yourcoffin.com.** . . . Generate an instant dot-com mission statement at **bright.net/~flounder/mission.html.** . . . Send a message to your representative (or favorite celebrity) at **tellthemnow.com.** . . . Create your own rock video at **buildarockstar.com.** Hungry? Load up on Glico Pocky, Morinaga HiChew, Petite Daifuku Choco Flake, and Mini Yokan at **japanesesnacks.com.** . . . Let SissyFight2000 (**sissyfight.com**) bring out the playground bully in you. . . . Surprise her with funky fashions from **chickshops.com.**

You can contact Mark Frauenfelder by e-mail at livingonline@playboy.com.

 (continued from page 80)

All Patrick Dorismond had to do was surrender a joint, and he would have had a night in jail, not the morgue.

fired the shot. It was midmorning before the detectives told Kevin Kaiser that his friend Patrick Dorismond was now on a gurney at the city morgue. He was 26 years old.

Today, in the war on drugs, a man ended up dying in the gutter, bleeding to death from a bullet fired by the good guys. Rarely had the malignant stupidity of the antidrug campaign stood in such stark relief. Dorismond's death was a mistake, but it was also an inevitable expression of official national policy.

•

In the fall of 1968, a presidential candidate appeared at Disneyland, determinedly climbing out of the early and shallow political grave into which his career had been thrown. If he were elected president, Richard M. Nixon promised America would face down a new enemy. For months, he had crossed the country, nimbly defining law and order as the central issue for a nation heaving with antiwar demonstrations, race riots and cultural entropy. Speaking at a Republican rally near Disney's Matterhorn ride in September 1968, Nixon sharpened his focus.

"As I look over the problems in this country, I see one that stands out particularly," he said. "The problem of narcotics—the modern curse of the youth, just like the plagues and epidemics of former years. And they are decimating a generation of Americans." No longer would the federal government play a near-invisible role against narcotics trafficking. Nixon campaigned on a plan to end one war, in Vietnam, and the declaration of another—a siege not against a state or people, but on an eclectic list of substances called drugs.

Long after Richard Nixon rose, then fell, and finally passed on, the war against drugs continues. The torch has passed from Republican to Democrat and back, and no party or politician has been outfervored in fighting drugs. Just in the past 10 years, the federal government has spent $150 billion fighting drugs. The federal antidrug budget this year is $17.8 billion, which is more than 220 times greater than Nixon's 1969 budget of $81 million. Compare that with the $22.2 billion spent per year by the Departments of State, Interior and Commerce combined.

Thousands of tons of illicit drugs have been seized at borders, ports and warehouses, from secret compartments in trucks, from hollowed-out holy statues and from the toilets used by human drug mules detained at airports until they pass the cocaine-packed condoms they swallow. Thousands of people have died on the streets of American cities, in Colombia and in Mexico. By uncounted thousands, law-abiding African Americans and Latinos have been ordered by troopers onto the shoulders of interstate highways, their cars searched, their very races transformed into probable cause for suspicion. Since 1980, the total number of people in prisons on drug offenses has risen from 50,000 to 400,000, most of them confined at an annual cost, per capita, that would pay for tuition, room and board at a private college.

A milestone in the war on drugs occurred in 1986 when key members of the House of Representatives, then controlled by the Democrats, saw a chance to take the sting out of Republican charges that Democrats were soft on criminals. The plan was to institute mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses, a notion that surfaced immediately after the death by cocaine overdose of University of Maryland basketball star Len Bias—in plenty of time for the November midterm elections. The idea was that anyone possessing five grams of crack cocaine would serve five years in prison, with no possibility of parole. Other drugs carried similar mandatory sentences. Normally, such a drastic revision to the federal code, with powerful implications for the entire justice system, would not be undertaken without a detailed consideration of the impact. For this one, though, no hearings were called. The Bureau of Prisons was not consulted. No judges were invited to share their thoughts. Speaker of the House Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, whose Boston constituents were shocked by the death of Bias (who had been drafted by the Celtics), helped the legislation sail through Congress. A new economy was created in the federal courts. The mandatory minimums can be waived only when the Justice Department certifies that one criminal offers incriminating information on another. Incredibly, the sentencing formulas of the supposedly tough legislation permit the convicts to snitch down the criminal food chain, so that drug dealers can cut time off their bits by, say, giving up girlfriends who may have done little more than answer phones and cook dinner.

As Eric Sterling, former counsel to the House Judiciary Committee, documented for a PBS *Frontline* episode, the doorman in a crack house is now legally responsible for every flake of cocaine in the house or handled by the people who run the house. The new legislation led to an explosion in the number of federal drug offenders in prison, which increased by 300 percent in six years. Only 11 percent of the federal drug-trafficking defendants are classified as major traffickers, and more than half are low-level offenders.

Snitch culture shaped U.S. foreign policy on Manuel Noriega, the hoodlum Panamanian dictator. By occasionally

"You have the right to remain silent. But then, if you really need to talk, I'm here for you."

dishing up the shipments or names of cocaine smugglers who used Panama as a transshipment point, Noriega earned a batch of hero-grams from U.S. drug enforcement authorities. The feds were happy for the collars; Noriega was content to have the yanquis weed his garden of cohorts or rivals who displeased him. Oliver North provided another coating of Teflon when Noriega promised North help with the contras.

Inevitably, a narcoindustrial complex has risen behind the colossal government expenditures. The Coast Guard deploys high-speed patrol boats, Customs flies early-warning surveillance planes, the DEA uses radar-equipped balloons to watch the Mexican border and local police get grants for narcotics enforcement operations. All these funds stitch the nets that haul in some real drug dealers—and the Patrick Dorismonds of the world.

Earlier this year, President Clinton announced he was sending $1.6 billion in military aid to fight drugs in the jungles of Columbia. The Colombian government will receive 60 new helicopters and enough money to fund two battalions. The aid will help the Colombian government attack just about any opponent or challenger to its authority—and, possibly, pinch off the traffic until it relocates once more.

"As in Vietnam, the policy is designed to fail," says Sylvester Salcedo, a retired naval lieutenant commander who worked for three years in the mid-Nineties as an intelligence officer on a joint drug task force. "All we're doing is making body counts, although instead of bodies, we're counting seizures—tons of cocaine, kilos of heroin." After learning of the new bolus of money being hurled at Colombia, Salcedo composed a letter of protest to President Clinton and returned the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal he received last year for his work on the task force.

No one involved denies that the seizure scorecard is the body count of the drug war. And no one argues that seizures crimp the supply of drugs on the streets.

Today, after three decades of blood and money, neither supply nor demand has flagged. Cheap, potent cocaine, heroin and marijuana remain abundant.

"It would be hard to think of an area of U.S. social policy that has failed more completely than the war on drugs," writes Michael Massing, author of *The Fix*, an insightful book critical of the drug war.

The futility of the drug war does not make drug abuse any less regrettable. For the poor and working poor, the fallout from addiction runs to child abuse, disintegrating families, inability to hold jobs, and crimes large and small. Of the nation's estimated 4 million hard-core drug users, only about half have access to treatment. While the rich go to Betty Ford, the poor go to jail—particularly African Americans. Though most drug offenders are white, black men are sent to state prisons at 13 times the rate of white men.

In the early days of the drug war, criminalization was seen as a dead-end street. After Richard Nixon was elected in 1968, his domestic policy advisors approached America's drug use primarily as a public-health issue, not a law-enforcement program. A Nixon aide, Egil "Bud" Krogh, designed a model program for the District of Columbia based on drug treatment and addiction alternatives. Only half of Nixon's federal drug budget was spent on law enforcement; the remainder went to treatment. By the late Eighties, when drugs replaced communism as the most reliable enemy in U.S. domestic political debates, the Reagan and Bush administrations repudiated treatment as a policy initiative, and about 80 percent of the money was spent on enforcement. Today, treatment still isn't a priority. Two out of every three dollars are spent on enforcement.

•

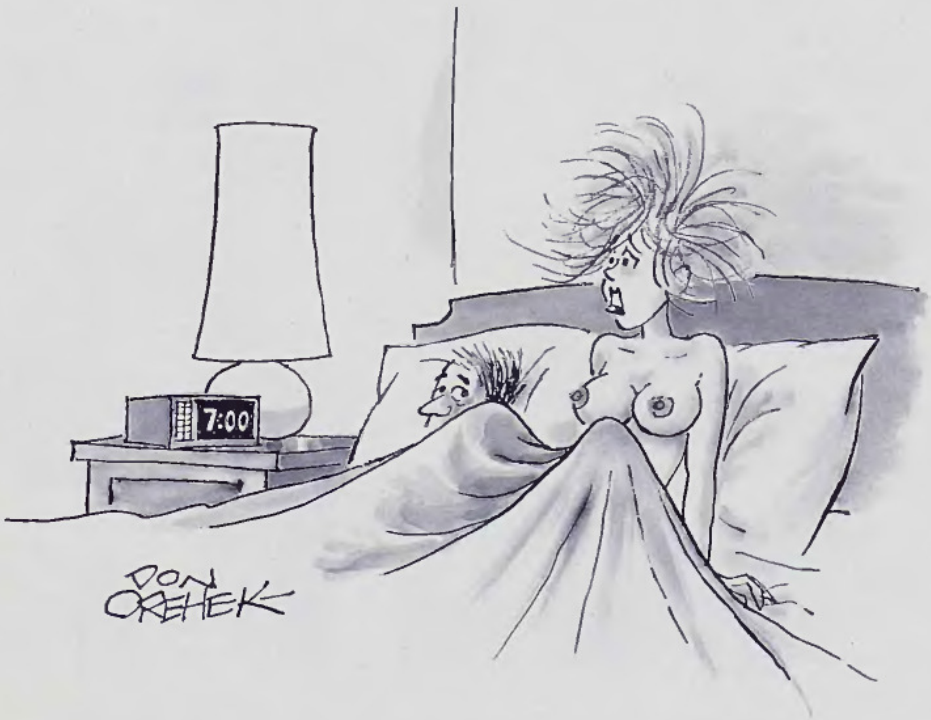
In October 1998, 30 years after Nixon declared the drug war, another Republican politician on the rise flew to North Carolina to make a speech, exasperated by what he saw as a lack of effort by government.

"We get to a drug-free America," Rudolph Giuliani said, "by arresting the people who are selling drugs, putting them in jail for a very, very long time, and recognizing the fact that people who sell those dangerous drugs are very much like murderers because they take people's lives from them."

People simply were not trying hard enough, argued Giuliani. A complicated figure, clownishly belligerent at times, brilliant at others, Giuliani, along with former Senator Alfonse D'Amato, once made a spectacular public relations foray into the Washington Heights section of Manhattan at the height of the crack era, both dressed in their versions of street duds. Giuliani campaigned for mayor in 1993 as a man who would crush New York's drug problem with intensive policing—and also by providing treatment facilities. He kept virtually none of his treatment promises.

By January 2000, Giuliani was being celebrated around the world for the rebirth of New York. He was a candidate in one of the most heavily watched Senate campaigns in modern history: Rudy the crime buster versus Hillary Rodham Clinton, first lady. But he had a problem. After seven years of decline, the murder rate in New York had crept up in 1999 and was starting to jump again in 2000. In mid-January, Mayor Giuliani and his police commissioner effectively declared a public safety emergency, quietly authorizing virtually unlimited overtime for the police department. Its mission: Attack drug dealing, anywhere, any time. The mayor was certain that earlier drug crackdowns—not demographic or other social changes—had led to the drop in crime. And he would do it again, harder.

The new program was called Operation Condor, and it sent a flood of street



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- Barry T., Contractor

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wretches sloshing down the chutes of precinct houses, holding cells and criminal courts. "In order to continue working the overtime, you are expected to produce," says Tom Scotto, president of the Detectives' Endowment Association.

The unofficial quota, say the undercovers, was five collars per tour for each team. No one sweated about the quality of the arrests. A man selling tamales on the street was busted for not having a permit. Another was grabbed for spitting on the sidewalk. Nearly 80 percent of all the Condor cases were misdemeanors or low-level violations. "We are spending all our time locking up three guys for smoking a joint, and there are no large-scale investigations going on," says one undercover sergeant in the narcotics division. All Patrick Dorismond had to do that fateful evening was surrender a joint, if he had had one, and he would have had a night in jail instead of the morgue.

With crime already low in New York City, the use of undercover officers to arrest people for minor infractions seemed to be a dangerous tactic. "If this is the safest large city in America, where are they finding all these people to arrest?" asked Bill Bratton, the former police commissioner who was given credit for driving down the city's crime rate. "In the early Nineties, making arrests was like fishing in a stocked pond. Eventually, you started to have fewer fish. Instead of reducing the number of people fishing in the pond, they actually increased them. So they're reeling out smaller and smaller fish."

Two months into Operation Condor, Police Commissioner Howard Safir declared it a success. The city's murder rate, however, was still climbing. A member of the city council stated that the name Operation Condor was also the name used for a death squad in Latin America.

"In case you didn't know, a condor is a bird," Safir replied.

Actually, Condor stood for Citywide Organized Narcotics Drug Operational Response. "They should call it Operation Band-Aid," remarked the narcotics sergeant.

In the two months since Operation Condor started, police had averaged 350 arrests per day. On the night of Dorismond's death, a Condor team had arrested eight men near the Port Authority Bus Terminal on 42nd Street. With the police van nearly full, the team was just about ready to bring in the night's haul to central booking.

Patrick Dorismond just wanted to catch a taxi. But the drug warriors refused to listen to him. They wanted to make some overtime. The mayor, who got them the overtime money, wanted better crime statistics—and to win another election. And Dorismond ended up dead.

Within hours of Dorismond's death, the mayor and the police commissioner unsealed Dorismond's 13-year-old juvenile court record. "I would not want a picture presented of an altar boy, when, in fact, maybe it isn't an altar boy," said the mayor. It turned out Dorismond had been an altar boy—and that he and Giuliani had both been students at Bishop Loughlin High School. Nevertheless, the mayor hurled abuse at the dead Dorismond and at people who did not have respect for the dangerous jobs performed by police officers—for flailing at everyone, it seemed, except himself. Even the police officer who shot Dorismond sent regrets and condolences to the victim's mother.

In May, sick with prostate cancer, his poll numbers collapsing after the Dorismond killing, his marriage dissolving, Giuliani pulled out of the Senate race against Hillary Clinton.

One might have thought that the Dorismond shooting would have occasioned soul-searching about the tactics of Operation Condor. But just 11 days after Dorismond died, a team of Condor cops was in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, on the prowl for drug offenders. In pursuit of a suspect, cops in an unmarked van swerved into a tree outside a crowded schoolyard, and some of the students thought the noise of the collision was a gunshot. Then the kids, hundreds of them, had more to worry about. The suspect ran through the schoolyard and, eyewitnesses reported, as many as five undercover cops, at least one with a visible drawn gun, followed. One child got cut on the leg and another had an asthma attack in the panic that engulfed the playground. The police got their man, a 19-year-old who, they said, had sold some dope to another young man not far from the school. It was another point tallied on the drug war's endless scoreboard.

"The whole purpose of an action like that," Mayor Giuliani explained, "is to remove drug dealers from the areas around schoolyards and playgrounds because of the great damage that drug dealers do, and the police want to do that without creating disruptions, problems or difficulty for children."

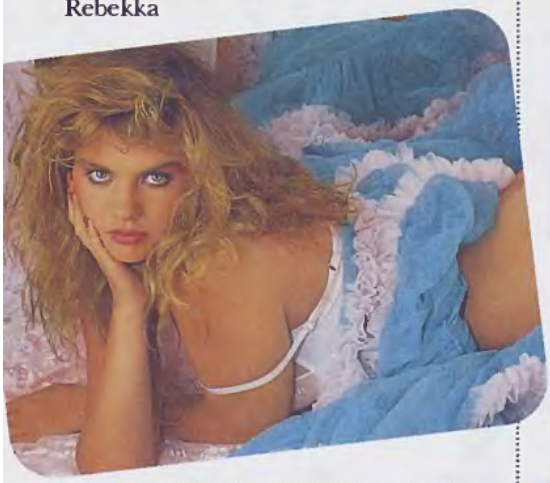
Mission unaccomplished.

"Today I'd like to try a little variation on our theme."

PLAYMATE NEWS

REBEKKA DOES E

Fans of Miss September 1986 Rebekka Armstrong know that she is an outspoken force on the issue of AIDS awareness. Rebekka, who tested HIV-positive in August 1989, regularly appears on the public-speaking circuit to discuss her experiences. At autograph sessions, she passes out condoms. Her latest contribution to society is *E True Hollywood Story: Rebekka Armstrong*, a 45-minute documentary about her life. "The show takes you through my childhood, my years with PLAYBOY and my diagnosis," Rebekka recently told Playboy.com. "Then it brings you up to speed with what I'm doing now. E interviewed me, my mother, my dad and his new wife, my boyfriend at the time of my diagnosis, Playboy Vice President of Promotions Cindy Rakowitz and Hugh Hefner." According to Jeffrey Shore, an executive producer for *E True Hollywood Story*, Rebekka's tale was perfect for television. "When I was told Rebekka had HIV, I was shocked because of the notion that Playmates are fantasy women, perfect in mind and body. Then I heard that Hugh Hefner had gone out of his way to help her, not at all trying to hide her. So we approached her to do the show." Rebekka's next goal is to run in the Chicago Marathon to benefit AIDS Project Los Angeles. "I feel really good right now," she says. "The amount of virus in my blood is undetectable. I'm still taking medications, but my current cocktail is a regimen of only three pills twice a day. I can do anything I want."



Watch for Rebekka's television special, *E True Hollywood Story: Rebekka Armstrong*, which debuted in May and will air again in the future. "I hope that it will give a face to the virus and help somebody somewhere," says Miss September 1986.

TYLYN'S BATTLE

Call her another Playmate with a cause. Tylyn John, Miss March 1992, is a leader in the fight against scleroderma, a disease that she learned she has last year. "When my son was four months old, my hands and feet started turning purple and blue," Tylyn says. The symptoms were due to Raynaud's phenomenon, a condition that is often paired with scleroderma. Soon, Tylyn was experiencing skin tightening, muscle aches and acid reflux. So far, she has appeared on MSNBC, *Extra* and *Entertainment Tonight* to talk about the disease. "There is a reason I have this disease," Tylyn says. "By speaking out, I hope to help others who have it."

35 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Our 1966 Playmate of the Year came off swimmingly in her aquatically themed pictorial. "Allison was one of the prettiest girls in Glendale," said photographer Melba Figge. "My husband was head over heels in love with her, as was everybody else." After her Centerfold appearance, Allison remained in the public eye. She took acting lessons and appeared regularly on TV's *Playboy After Dark*. "Because of PLAYBOY," she says, "I was able to have a career in modeling and TV commercials for 25 years. It amazes me, but I'm sure that I'll be asked to pose and sit for an interview when I'm 90."

Allison Parks.

SCRAPBOOK

Wouldn't you love to be a fly on the wall at Hef's parties? They're everything you've heard and more. Clockwise from above: Jenny McCarthy and Barbara Moore linger in lingerie. Tiffany Taylor and Maria Luisa Gil get back in black. Vin Diesel shmoozes Summer Altice. Jodi Ann Paterson and Heather Kozar give the Cleveland Browns a tour.

PLAYMATE NEWS

My Favorite Playmate By Marc Anthony

"My favorite Playmate is Miss June 1997 Carrie Stevens. I choose her for two reasons. First, my brother likes her. And second, she's a whole package."

Carrie is quite the accomplished actress. Her latest juicy role is in *Metal God*, starring Mark Wahlberg. On the small screen, she hosted *E's Wild on the Virgin Islands*.

TWO THUMBS UP!

Reviewing adult films is a tough job, but somebody has to do it. Dianne Chandler is the newest film critic for *Adult Video News*. "While I was chatting on the PLAYBOY Mailing List, I became pals with an editor at *AVN*," she says. "He told me that he enjoyed my writing on the PML and asked me whether I would be interested in reviewing videos for *Adult Video News*. Of course I was delighted, and I have had one review published every month for the past six months. I can't believe I'm getting paid to write about them. My editor says my reviews are among the magazine's most popular."

BEAUTY AND THE BILLFISH

When Manhattanite Rachel Jeán Marteen gets fed up with the urban jungle, she heads to Guatemala for a relaxing fishing trip. Miss August 1995's most recent fish story involves an inn called Fins and Feathers, a boat named *Captain Hook* and a 100-pound sailfish. Here she is pictured with the catch of the day and Joe Scharf and Jose Valdez. "Catching those sailfish was a real power trip," Rachel says. "Next time I'm going to invite my family."

GIRL TALK

What's shaking with Miss December 1999 Brooke Richards? We got the scoop during a recent online chat.

Q: What's the difference between being a Special Editions model and being a Playmate?

A: It's a huge difference. As a Playmate, you become part of a family. And there is so much more work involved!

Brooke Richards.

Q: Please tell us about some Playmate perks.

A: I love Mansion parties, especially the Midsummer Night's Dream party. Hef threw a party before the Super Bowl that was so much fun. There were tons of celebrities.

Q: What are your interests outside of PLAYBOY?

A: I've always wanted my own business. I would love to own a salon or a clothing store. Making myself financially secure is important at my young age. I also love art.

Q: We hear that not everyone in your family is happy that you're a Playmate. Is this true?

A: Yes. Some of them are still not talking to me. Some of them ask me for autographs. But I have 13 brothers and sisters, so if one isn't talking to me, it's no big deal. It's their loss, not mine. I will talk to them any time they want. I hold no grudges.

Q: Which Playmate do you adore?

A: Julia Schultz. She is hilarious. She always makes me laugh.

PLAYMATE BIRTHDAYS

October 2: Miss March 1964
Nancy Scott
October 4: Miss November 1967
Kaya Christian
October 9: Miss July 1965
Gay Collier
October 19: Miss April 1987
Anna Clark
October 22: Miss October 1997
Layla Harvest Roberts

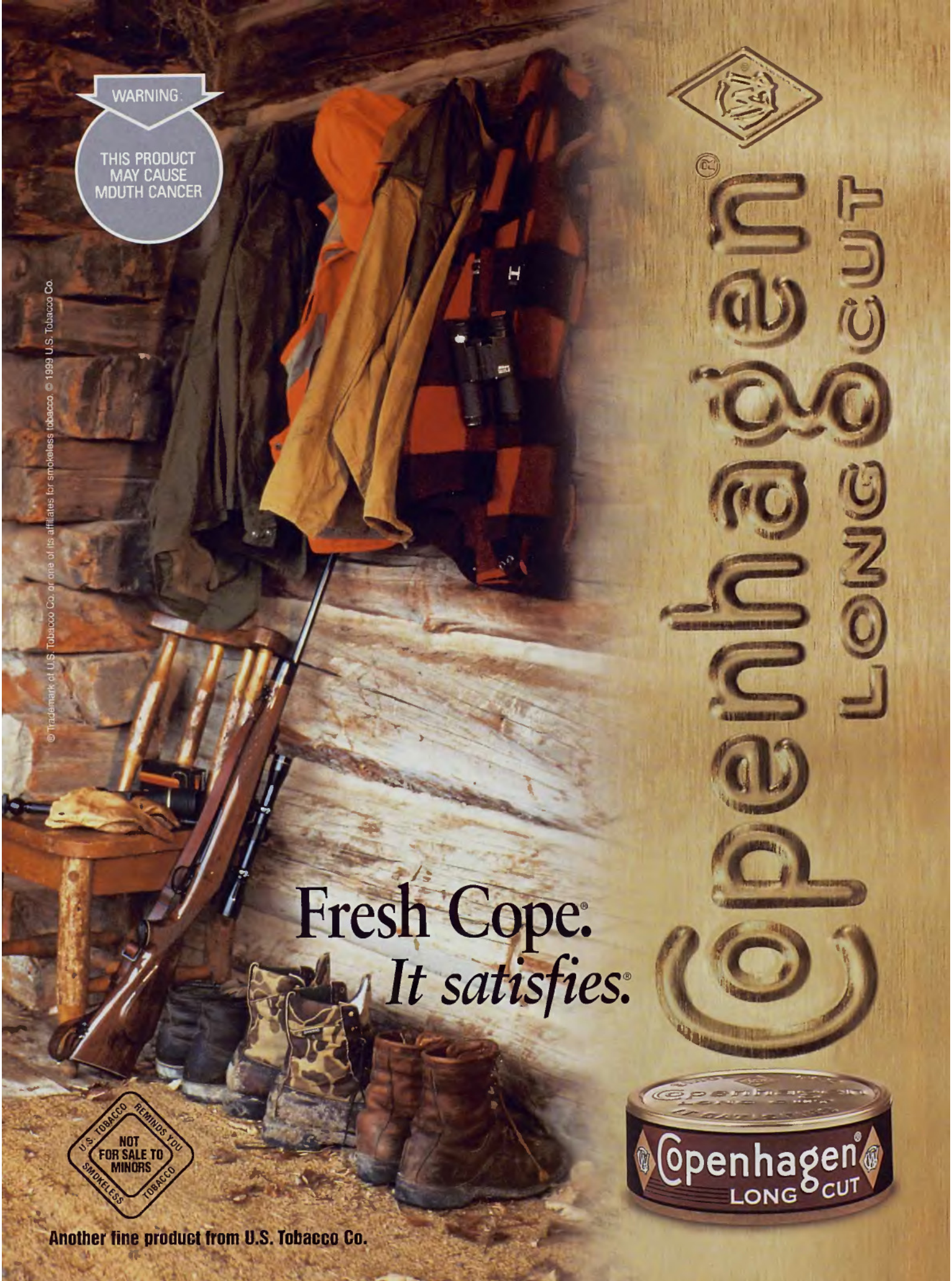
PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Models and rock stars go hand in hand. Just ask **Heidi Mark**, who recently tied the knot with Motley Crue lead singer **Vince Neil**. . . . Speaking of Crue wives, **Donna D'Errico** (below), wife of guitarist **Nikki Sixx**, has showcased her comedic talents as a guest host of *Talk Soup* on E. . . . **Jami Ferrell** and **Elke Jeinsen** appear in *Pursuit of Happiness*, a romantic comedy. . . . *Baywatch Hawaii* is steamier than ever now that **Alicia Rickter** has signed on as a regular. . . . **Julia Schultz** just wrapped the feature film *Forsaken*. She will also appear with **Jerry O'Connell** and **Shannon Elizabeth** in *Tomcats*. **Natalia Sokolova** has a cameo in the same flick. . . . If you're into Latin jazz, check out *A Tribute to Maria and Charlie*. The saucy CD was produced and arranged by **Yvette Vickers**. . . . **Monique Noel** raised more than $5700 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America when she ran the Maui marathon. . . . The hottest trend in Los Angeles? Attending a taping of USA's music show *Jimmy and Doug's Farm club.com*. Just ask our girls (below, left to right) **Jennifer Rovero, Kelly Monaco, Heather Kozar, Daphnee Duplaix, Lisa Betancourt** of Playmate Promotions, **Jodi Ann Paterson, Kalin Olson** and **Vanessa Gleason.**

Heidi and Vince: They do.

Donna talks soup.

Formclub animals.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PLAYBOY on the scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

DIVERS' PLEASURES

So what if you haven't explored the wreck of the *Andrea Doria*. Dive watches are red-hot status symbols, and wearing one says you've at least considered going below. The best dive watch endorsement, of course, came from the underwater explorer Jacques Cousteau. He and his film crew wore Blancpain Fifty Fathoms watches during the filming of his deep-sea documentary *The Silent World*. Today's model is just as resilient but can go three times as deep. An Omega watch is the one favored by James Bond, and it has worked wonders for him in and out of the briny. Plus, Omega is also the only brand of watch that's been worn on the moon. The Seamaster model is water-resistant to 300 meters and features a helium escape valve for deep diving. Italy's Panerai breaks the Swiss monopoly on high-end dive watches. Until 1993, these tickers were reserved for Italy's navy, but now models such as the Luminor are declassified. And while most watches are battery-powered or automatic, Seiko's Kinetic converts motion to electricity—one more reason to keep moving when a moray eel is trailing you. Swatch's Irony Scuba 200 Chrono features a stopwatch function and is water-resistant to a depth of 200 meters—plus, its $140 price makes it distinctly affordable. Assembled from steel and titanium, Audemars Piguet's Royal Oak Offshore is built like a car—and costs just as much as one. Its distinctive nautical look was inspired by a ship's porthole.

—LARRY OLMSTED

JAMES IMBROGNO

Top: A unique half-moon bezel bridge protects the crown of Panerai's Luminor Submersible with titanium case from accidental adjustments to its time setting ($3500). Above (top to bottom): Seiko's Kinetic can run for two weeks without motion and recharges itself when worn ($495). Swatch's Irony Scuba 200 Chrono comes in four colors and styles, including the Cherguy, shown here ($140). Left (clockwise from upper left): Audemars Piguet's Royal Oak Offshore is a timepiece you won't want to lose in the deep or leave in your locker ($15,200). Once wound, the Blancpain Fifty Fathoms stores 100 hours of reserve power ($6900). The Omega Seamaster pictured here is a limited-edition (9999) America's Cup model ($2695). All three are available from Swiss FineTiming in Highland Park, Illinois.

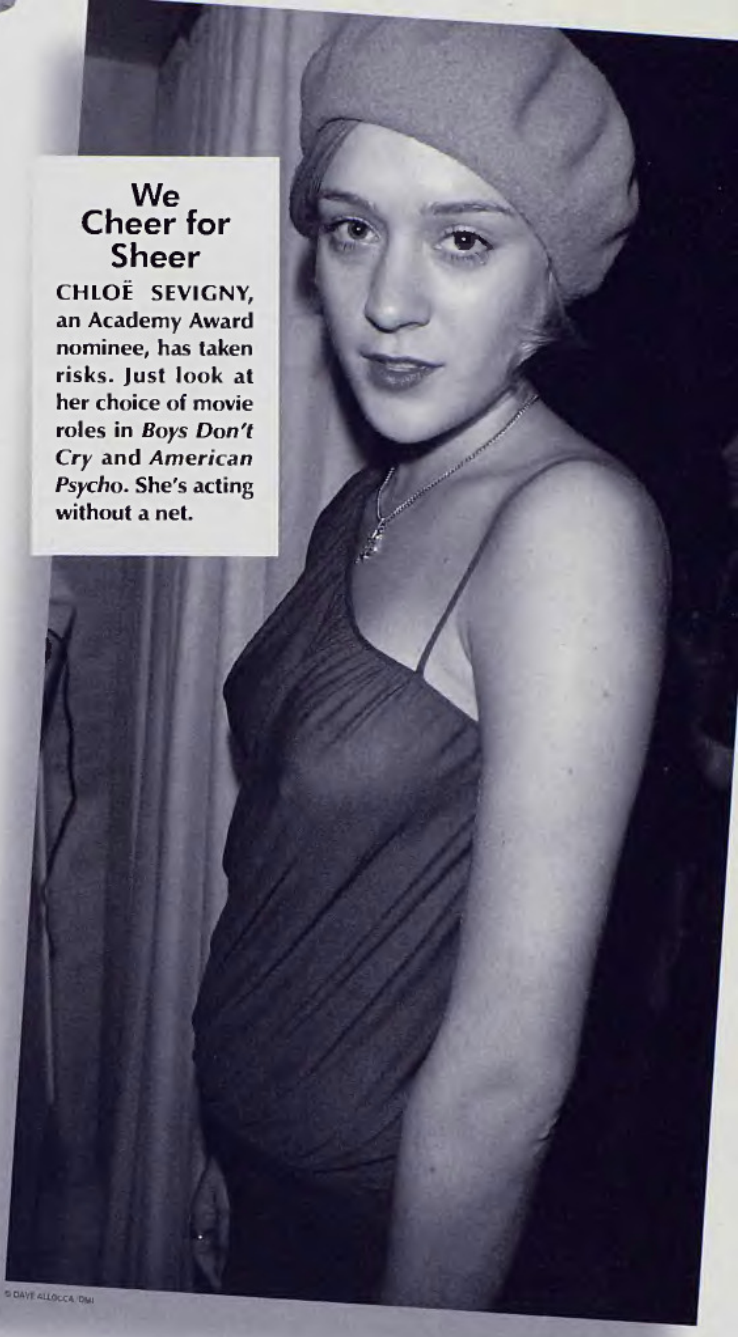
WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 168.

Grapevine

© JONATHAN BIRCH/ BIRCH PHOTOGRAPHY

She's to Dye For

Hooters girl SHERYL DYE has modeled for Budweiser and Jägermeister, and in a swimsuit. Here, she takes a pass on the suit. How lucky for us.



© DAVE ALLOCCA/DMI

We Cheer for Sheer

CHLOË SEVIGNY, an Academy Award nominee, has taken risks. Just look at her choice of movie roles in *Boys Don't Cry* and *American Psycho*. She's acting without a net.

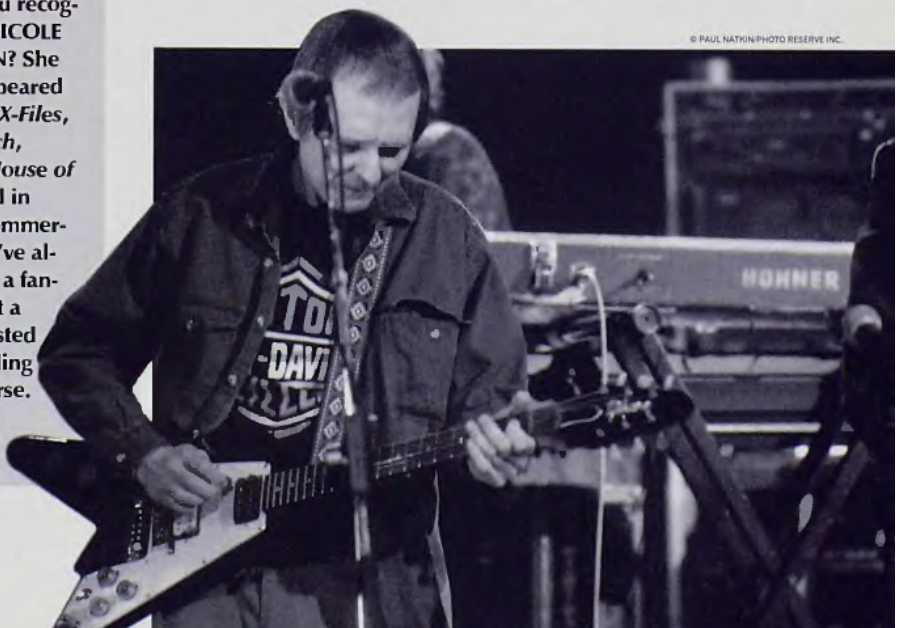
© VINCE CAVATAIO

Nicole's Along for the Ride

Do you recognize NICOLE JENSEN? She has appeared on *The X-Files*, *Baywatch*, MTV's *House of Style* and in Sprite commercials. We've always had a fantasy about a bare-breasted woman riding a white horse. Dreams do come true.

Jammin' With Dad

Although the Smashing Pumpkins' *Machina/The Machines of God* went gold, BILLY CORGAN has announced that the group will disband at the end of the year—and not because he called Dad onstage for a few tunes.



© PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC.

© PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC.

Nashville Songbird

SHELBY LYNNE has been around country music long enough for Tammy Wynette to have called her its best voice. Check out her CD *I Am Shelby Lynne* and see why one critic said she can "sing the chrome off a trailer hitch."

© MIRANDA SHEN/ CELEBRITY PHOTO

In Tip-Top Shape

With *The Insider* on video and *Snoops* in limbo, GINA GERSHON had time for theater, appearing in *The Vagina Monologs* in New York. Her performance in this top earned our applause.

© CRAIG R. SOTRES

A Taylor Without a Stitch

When she's not posing for the hotbody.com cameras, ALISON TAYLOR is a respiratory therapist. Look for her in the *Hot Encores 7* video. She'll take your breath away.

Potpourri

BOXER REBELLION

WebUndies.com has the most comprehensive collection of novelty boxer shorts on the Internet. The Superman emblem, *Austin Powers* ("The Swinger Has Landed") and the *South Park* kids (all pictured here) give the briefest hint of the 140 styles Web Undies offers in both silk and flannel. Even WCW is represented—at last you get to sit on Goldberg's face. A pair costs $11.95 and up. For online gift-givers, the company offers a Boxer Gram. That way, you can have a pair of silk leopard-print boxers shipped to your sweetheart's house before you even arrive.

BABY, IT'S COLD UP THERE

Want to see where Santa lives? For $25,500, the Northwest Passage adventure travel company will take you to the North Pole. The trip, via cross-country skis and dogsleds, runs next April 15–29 out of Resolute, Nunavut. To qualify, you have to attend a shakedown week of sledding and skiing in northern Minnesota, January 30 to February 4. (Cost: $2500.) Call Northwest at 800-732-7328 or visit northpole-expeditions.com.

THE DEATH OF YOU

It's things-that-go-bump-in-the-night time again, and this year Death Studio has outdone itself with these ghoulish full-head masks. At upper left is Howdy Dead, a ventriloquist's dummy with an evil mind of his own ($65). Next to him is Death Machine (also $65). We wouldn't want to be the dentist who works on his choppers. Old red eyes is back in the upper right corner—the Darkside Scarecrow who is having a bad straw-hair day ($80). At lower right is El Diablo, a devilish fellow who's so horny he needs two sets (also $80). Call Death Studios at 219-362-4321 to order, or check deathstudios.com for more masks.

HOW FRENCH!

"The grown-up's guide to fulfilling your dreams in the land of sunflowers, cheese, wine and châteaus" is how Ten Speed Press describes *The Grown-Up's Guide to Living in France* by Rosanne Knorr ($14.95). In it you'll find information on obtaining a residence permit and how to join the Accueil des Villes Françaises, a national organization that welcomes newcomers. (Surprise: It has a Paris chapter.) Order the guide by calling 800-841-2665.

BITTER WITH THE SWEET

Fernet-Branca is an 80-proof Italian bitters that has cured many a hangover. Some attribute its restorative qualities to the hair of the dog. Others say it tastes like a dog. For $35, you can own the 35″x25″ reproduction of one of the early 20th century posters pictured here. (Another, featuring mermaids, is also available.) Send a check to Branca Products, 12-14 Desbrosses Street, New York, New York 10013 or go to brancaproducts.com.

LET'S GO RACING

The $40 hardcover *World Motor Racing Circuits* by Peter Higham and Bruce Jones is a spectator's guide to 69 international circuits ranging from Grand Prix to Nascar (even the new Chicago track is included). Detailed track diagrams and an insightful text make it a terrific book to have on hand the next time you catch the Grand Prix of Monaco on cable. Trafalgar Square is the publisher.

FULLY BOOKED

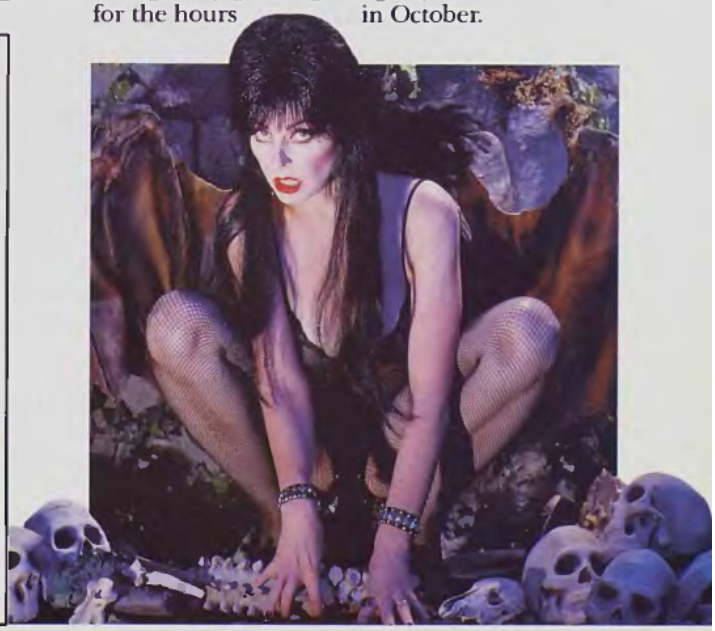
Library Photo Albums such as the ones pictured here look like they belong in an English gentleman's study. In reality, each hand-painted, gilded and polished faux-antique volume stores up to 100 4″x6″ snapshots. Two dozen titles are available, including *By the Sea*, *Sporting Days* and *Travels Near and Far* ($12.50 each with brown, claret, green or navy bindings). Or you can order a custom title ($17.50). All albums are non-PVC and acid free. Call Richard E. Bishop, Ltd. at 800-247-3300 to order.

HAVING A BALL WITH BUD

We all know that beer and bowling go hand in hand. So Ebonite, the bowling ball manufacturer, has teamed up with Anheuser-Busch to produce the translucent Budweiser Ball pictured here. As they say down at the bowling alley, "Let the good times roll." Price: $150, in bowling pro shops. If the Bud Ball doesn't strike your fancy, Ebonite sells a style that contains a reproduction of a human skull and another modeled after an enormous eyeball. Less spooky but still flashy is the company's Tai Chi, a ball fashioned after the yin-yang symbol.

SHE'S BACK—SPOOKIER THAN EVER

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark, is now featured at Spookyworld, the horror theme park near Foxboro Stadium in Foxboro, Massachusetts. In the Elvira Haunted House, you'll encounter ghoulish effects that include a "living bust" of Elvira (interesting), a disgusting collection of stuffed heads, a mad doctor's lab and a garden with ghastly growing things. Call 978-838-0200 for the hours in October.



Next Month

SCREEN STEAM

OVERKILL

SHIPS PASSING

NAKED RUNWAY

CHYNA—SHE'S NUDE AND SHE'S READY TO RUMBLE. AN EXCLUSIVE PICTORIAL OF THE STAR WRESTLER AND ALL HER MUSCLE GROUPS

THE GREAT BIKER MURDER TRIAL—IT'S THE HELL'S ANGELS VERSUS THE OUTLAWS. A TRUE STORY OF MURDER, MAYHEM AND DUDES WHO WILL STICK YOU IF YOU LOOK AT THEM WRONG. BY **JAMES R. PETERSEN**

RUSSIAN GIRLS—THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL. THEY WEAR TRASHY CLOTHES AND LAUGH IN YOUR FACE WHEN YOU SUGGEST THEATER AND DINNER. THEN THEY NAIL YOU ON THE COUCH. THE WORLD'S BEST-KEPT SECRET BY **MATT TAIBBI**

SEX IN CINEMA—AN AUSPICIOUS START FOR THE NEW CENTURY. **JULIA ROBERTS'** CLEAVAGE, **MENA SUVARI'S** ROSES, **CHARLIZE THERON'S** SHEETS. PLUS **MADONNA, KIM, SANDRA** AND X-RATED SCREEN STEAMERS

OVERKILL—BILLY BOB RIZZO IS ONE BITCH OF A FILMMAKER. THIS HALLOWEEN, HIS ENEMIES GET REVENGE. FICTION BY **RAY BRADBURY**

JAKE PLUMMER—THE ARIZONA QUARTERBACK WHO PUT THE CARDINALS ON THE MAP GOES DEEP ON LOCKER-ROOM ANTICS, DRUGS IN SPORTS AND WHY HE IS NICKNAMED CAPTAIN CHAOS. PROFILE BY **ASHLEY JUDE COLLIE**

NEIL LABUTE—THE CONTROVERSIAL MAN BEHIND *IN THE COMPANY OF MEN* AND *YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS* ON PRUDISH HOLLYWOOD, GAY BASHING, SEX AS A BARGAINING TOOL AND WHY MOST MEN HAVE A *LORD OF THE FLIES* SIDE. 20 QUESTIONS BY **BERNARD WEINRAUB**

WHAT I LEARNED IN SEX CLASS—**LOU PAGET** TEACHES SEX SEMINARS AROUND THE WORLD. HER TIPS ARE SO GOOD YOUR GIRLFRIEND WILL WONDER WHERE YOU GOT THEM

BEN STILLER—THE THINKING GUY'S FUNNYMAN ON WORKING WITH DE NIRO IN *MEET THE PARENTS*, BEING INFATUATED WITH JANEANE GAROFALO AND WHY HE PHONED HIS FATHER DURING A BAD ACID TRIP. INTERVIEW BY **DAVID RENSIN**

FEAR, LOATHING AND PORN STARS IN VEGAS—A RANDY REPORTER HITS THE AVN AWARDS, THAT TRIPLE-X THEME PARK OF SUPERHOT SEX. BY **COREY LEVITAN**

PLAYBOY'S NATIONAL GUIDE TO THE STEEP AND DEEP—TIME TO WAX THOSE SKIS AND HIT THE POWDER. THE BEST RUNS, JUMPS AND SLOPE-SIDE HANGOUTS AND, OF COURSE, WHERE THE SKI BUNNIES ARE. BY **LARRY OLMSTED**

TWO SHIPS—ELAINE IS GOING TO VISIT HER SISTER. MIRSKY IS GOING TO CHEER UP HIS BROTHER. IT'S A MARRIAGE BASED ON DECEPTION. FICTION BY **PAUL BECKMAN**

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